

40 H. sing. 363 ^e 13



An HISTORICAL
A C C O U N T
OF THE
BRITISH TRADE
OVER THE
C A S P I A N S E A;
WITH THE
Revolutions of P E R S I A.
V O L. III.



F. Hayman inv. et del.

C. Grignon sculp.

THE
REVOLUTIONS
OF
PERSIA:

Containing the REIGN of
SHAH SULTAN HUSSEIN,

WITH THE
Invasion of the Afghans,

And the REIGNS of
SULTAN MIR MAGHMUD
AND HIS

Succeſſor SULTAN ASHREEF.

To which is prefixed,
A chronological abridgement of the PERSIAN monarchy from its first
foundation.

V O L. I.

By JONAS HANWAY, Merchant.

L O N D O N.

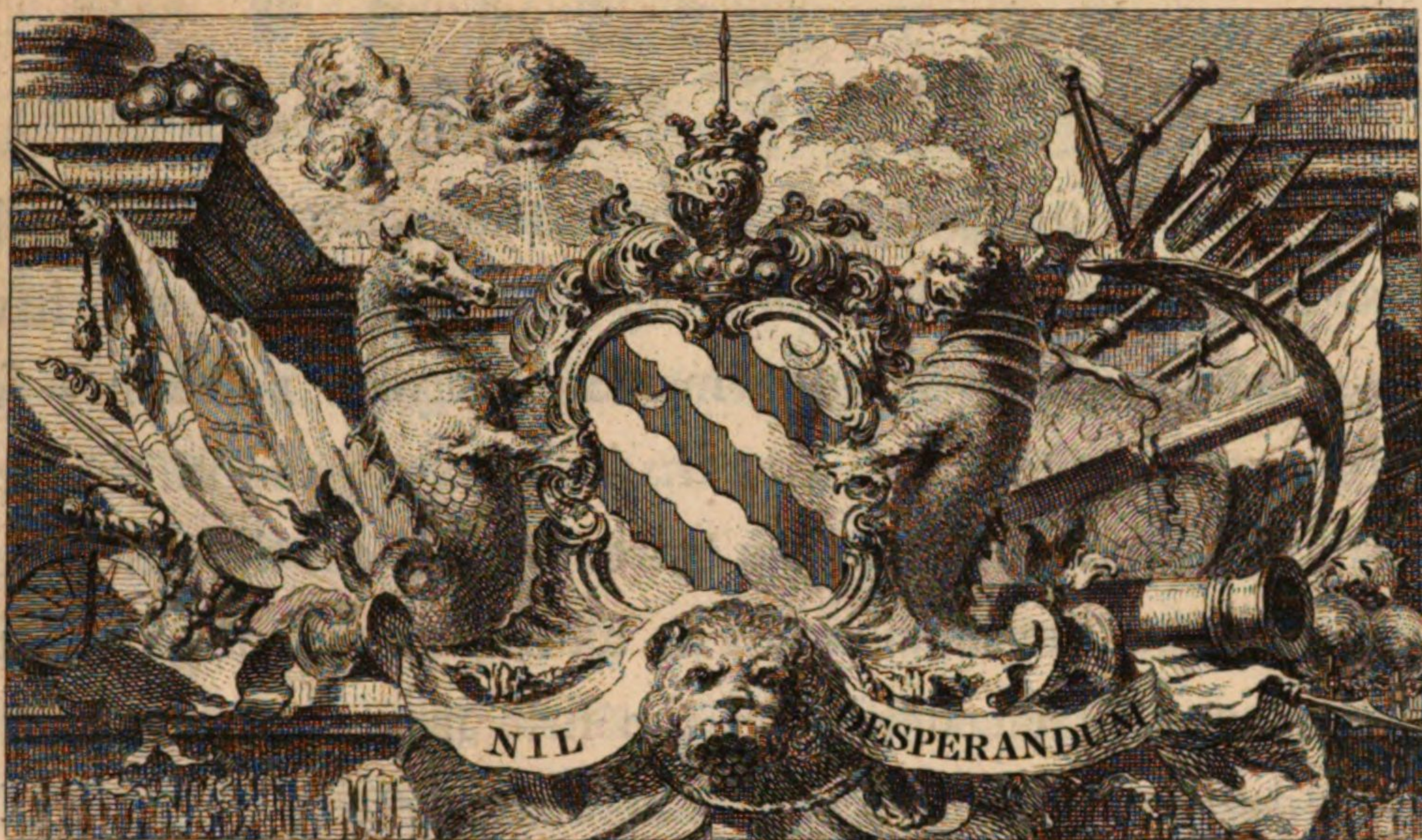
Sold by Mr. DODSLEY, in Pall-mall; Mr. NOURSE, Mr. MILLAR, Mr. VAILLANT,
and Mr. PATTERSON, in the Strand; Mr. WAUGH, in Lombard-Street; and Mr.
WILLOCK, in Cornhill. M DCC LIII.

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THE
REVOLUTION
OF
1848
IN
GERMANY
AND
ITALY



Invasion of
the
Soviet Union
in
1941
by
the
German
Wehrmacht
and
the
Fascist
Italian
Army
under
Mussolini
during
World
War
II.



A. Walker inv. et sculp.

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE
GEORGE LORD ANSON,
BARON of SOBERTON,
Vice-admiral of ENGLAND, first LORD COMMIS-
SIONER of the admiralty, and one of his
MAJESTY'S most honourable privy-council.

MY LORD,
WHEN the various events were known of the fa-
mous expedition to the SOUTH SEAS, under your
LORDSHIP'S direction, your calmness and constancy, in cir-
cumstances

cumstances so discouraging, and oftentimes terrible, naturally excited a respectful idea of your character: but we have since been indebted in great measure to your LORDSHIP for more eminent services. You had the command in the first truly ENGLISH day, which gave a turn to the late war, and diverted the blow aimed at an important branch of our commerce. That day gave the first mortal wound to the maritime power of FRANCE, and compensated for the little success of our arms in FLANDERS. And here, my LORD, affection for my brother, who did his duty under your auspices, as well as the love of my country, demand the tribute of my particular thanks.

The desire of distinction, so deeply implanted in our nature, can have no principle more noble than that of advancing the happiness of the society. The highest offices of life, necessarily create a pre-eminence in toil; the possessors of them are therefore intitled to the greater veneration. Men of active spirits are ever looking forward. The same genius which has hitherto conducted your LORDSHIP will still lead you on to the increase of your fame, and the acquisition of new honour. On that board at which your LORDSHIP presides, depends in a very great degree the welfare and safety of
of

of this nation. The splendor of this monarchy is supported by commerce, and commerce by naval strength. Whilst the several states of EUROPE accumulate maritime power, your LORDSHIP's charge receives an additional weight ; and in proportion as your services prove instrumental to your country's welfare, your glory will increase.

In the following sheets, which I have the honour to present to your LORDSHIP, we have a remarkable instance of the pomp and splendor of one of the greatest eastern monarchies, humbled even to the dust by the iniquitous conduct of ministers. How great the contrast between these and the nearer examples with which we are furnished by our own country ! Pursuits actuated by honest motives, directed by wise laws, under a just and legal sovereign, should they erect no other trophy than an honourable tomb, must be incomparably preferable to the proudest monuments of successful villainy.

But providence has been indulgent to your LORDSHIP : your endeavours for the service of your country, have been brought to a successful issue, and your wishes accomplished in the reward of those services. May that providence still
pro-

protect you in all the important concerns of your station,
and in all the circumstances of your private life. I am, with
great respect,

MY LORD,

YOUR LORDSHIP'S

most obedient

London,
January, 1753.

humble servant,

Jonas Hanway.

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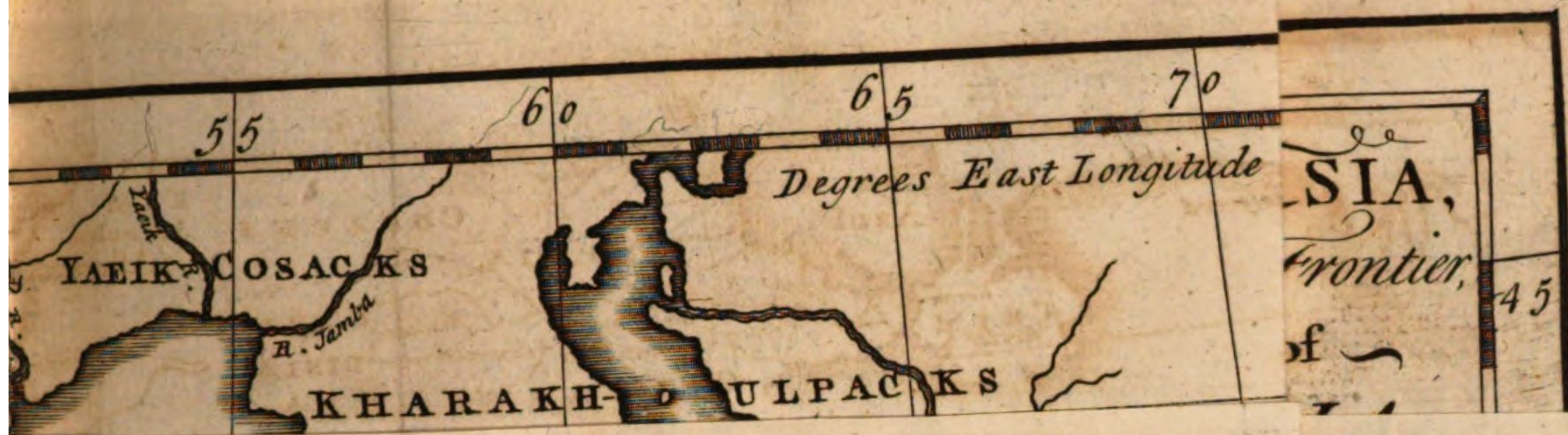
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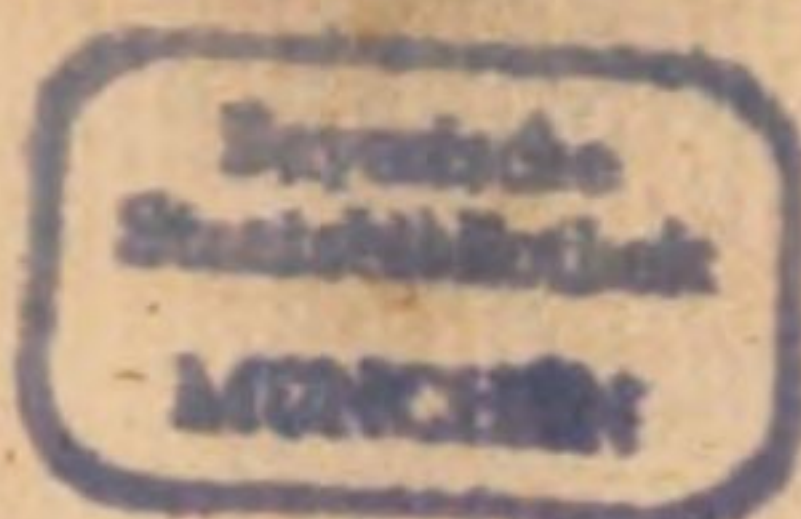
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VOL. III. PART I.
A
SUMMARY VIEW
OF THE
PERSIAN MONARCHY,
FROM THE
FIRST FOUNDATION BY CYRUS
TO THE
REIGN OF HUSSEIN, THE ELEVENTH AND LAST
KING OF THE SEFFIE DYNASTY.
CHAP. I.

A chronological account of the PERSIAN empire, from its foundation by CYRUS the GREAT, in the year of the world 3426, to the invasion of ALEXANDER the GREAT.

CYRUS the GREAT, A.M. 3426.^a

THE PERSIAN empire, founded by CYRUS the GREAT, was the^b second of the four antient monarchies which have been established in the world. It is remarkable that this wise and formidable prince was mentioned by name in the sacred scriptures two hundred

VOL. III. A years

^a It must be observed there are very few dates in which historians agree exactly.

^b The first was the ASSYRIAN.

years before his birth ; for God was pleased to declare that he would be his guide, and lead him by the hand to subdue all nations before him.

This prince was the son of CAMBYSES king of PERSIA, by MANDANA daughter of ASTYAGES king of MEDIA. CYAXARES, who succeeded his father ASTYAGES, being threatened with an invasion by the king of BABYLON, entered into an alliance with the king of PERSIA, and several other princes bordering on his dominions, for their mutual defence ; on this occasion CAMBYSES sent CYRUS with 30,000 foot to join the MEDES. CYRUS entered the enemy's country, gained a complete victory over the BABYLONIANS in the first engagement, in which their king fell in battle : he then marched up to the walls of BABYLON ; but finding that the garrison consisted of 100,000 men, he retired with CYAXARES into MEDIA, to strengthen their alliance and augment their forces. CYAXARES, sensible of the merit of his nephew CYRUS, gave him his daughter in marriage, and made him heir to his MEDIAN dominions ; upon which CYRUS marched towards BABYLON, leaving CYAXARES in MEDIA. CYRUS surprised the BABYLONIANS before they joined their forces, and, marching with the utmost expedition, gave them battle, and was a second time victorious. He took SARDIS, and making CRÆSUS king of LYDIA † prisoner, possessed himself of all his treasure and the wealth of that opulent city ; but restored CRÆSUS to his throne.

After subduing the LESSER ASIA, SYRIA, and part of ARABIA, CYRUS marched a second time to the walls of BABYLON. He caused a number of canals to be made, and on the evening of the feast, cutting the banks of the TIGRIS, the water of that river being let into the canals, fell so low that he marched several bodies of forces on both sides of the city, along the bed of the river. The BABYLONIANS were then solemnizing a grand festival, so that he found an opportunity of entering the brazen gates which the drunken BABYLONIANS had left open ; and taking BALSHAZAR the king and his whole court prisoners, put them to the sword, fulfilling the prophecy of DANIEL, that the cruelties which the BABYLONIANS had exercised upon others, should be returned upon themselves.

CYRUS,

† Situated in the present NATOLIA.

CYRUS, after being 26 years general of the forces both of his father and uncle, at length recovered all the countries in AFRICA and LESSER ASIA, which had been in subjection to the ASSYRIAN empire. He then returned to BABYLON, and both his father CAMBYSES and his uncle CYAXARES dying, he became the sole monarch of this vast empire of PERSIA.

In the first year of the reign of CYRUS^c, expired the seventieth year of the JEWISH captivity in BABYLON, and by the advice of the prophet DANIEL he published an edict for re-building the temple of JERUSALEM and re-peopling that city with its antient inhabitants: he restored all the vessels of the temple, which NEBUCHADONOSOR had taken from thence and placed in the temple of BAAL at BABYLON. Upon this the JEWS returned to their own country under the conduct of ZOROBABEL. In CYRUS's time the PERSIAN empire extended from the gulph of ORMUS and the RED SEA and from ETHIOPIA on the south, to the EUXINE and CASPIAN SEAS on the north; and from the river INDUS^d on the east, to the deserts of LYBIA^e, the MEDITERRANEAN and EGEEAN^f SEAS on the west.

CYRUS made it the business of his reign to exercise justice, and to relieve the oppressed; governing the nations he had conquered with such humanity and tenderness, that they became his faithful subjects. He reigned sole monarch of PERSIA only seven years, and died in BABYLON leaving his son CAMBYSES his successor.

CAMBYSES, A. M. 3433.

Soon after CAMBYSES ascended the throne of PERSIA; AMASIS the tributary king of EGYPT, endeavoured to render himself independent of the PERSIAN crown. CAMBYSES invaded EGYPT, but AMASIS dying, he gave battle to his son PSAMENITUS, and entirely defeated him: this prince flying to MEMPHIS ‡ his capital, was taken prisoner, and the city surrendered; on which not only the EGYPTIANS submitted to CAMBYSES, but

^c A. M. 3426.

^d Now called the SCIND.

^e The part of AFRICA bordering

ON EGYPT.

^f ARCHIPELAGO.

‡ A city of EGYPT in the island of DELTA.

but LIBYA, CYRENIACA *, and other distant countries sought his protection. But the ETHIOPIANS, and the inhabitants of that part of AFRICA where stood the temple of JUPITER AMMON, refusing to submit, he invaded both at the same time. The army he sent against the AMMONIANS † was destroyed by a tempest, which raised the sands in such a manner that his troops were suffocated. In ETHIOPIA he succeeded but little better, the greatest part of his troops were destroyed by famine and reduced to the necessity of eating human flesh. With the small remains of his army he returned to THEBES, where he plundered the temples of that opulent city of all their valuable moveables, and demolished those beautiful structures.

CAMBYSES became so jealous of his brother SMERDIS, who had accompanied him in this war, that he sent him into PERSIA, and there caused him to be murdered. His sister MEROE, whom he had married, suffered the same fate, for making some reflexions on this act of cruelty. This prince had little sensibility of the laws of humanity, but substituted pride and cruelty in their place; he caused many of his great officers to be buried alive. He one day asked PREXASPES what the people said of him? That minister replied, they admired his many good qualities, but wished that he had not such an inclination for wine. "That is, returned CAMBYSES, they imagine that wine deprives me of my senses, but you shall judge of that immediately." Having drunk more than usual, he ordered his cupbearer, who was son to PREXASPES, to stand at the further end of the room, and taking a bow and arrow, declared he aimed at his heart; after he had shot him, he ordered the young lord to be opened, and his heart to be brought to him; the arrow having pierced it, he shewed it to his father, and asked him if he had not a steady hand? The unhappy parent replied, with the flattery of the modern times to PERSIAN kings; "APOLLO himself could not have shot better."

In the eighth year of the reign of CAMBYSES, an impostor resembling his brother SMERDIS who had been put to death, imposing on the people, usurped the crown. CAMBYSES who was then absent resolved to march

* Now called BARCA in AFRICA

† Inhabiting a part of LIBYA

march against the usurper, but, as he was mounting his horse, his sword slipping out of its scabbard gave him a wound in the thigh, of which he died. This CAMBYSES is supposed to be the AHASUERUS mentioned in the scriptures.

SMERDIS, *A.M.* 3441.

The usurper SMERDIS, the ARTAXERXES of the scripture, was the son of one of the MAGI, who was governor of BABYLON, and is therefore usually stiled the MAGIAN. He endeavoured by all means to gain the affections of the people; and, to prevent his being discovered, concealed himself in the royal palace: but this precaution served only to raise the suspicion of the great men, among whom was OTANES, whose daughter PHEDYMA, SMERDIS had taken to his bed. This lady finding that her husband had lost his ears, which for some offence had been cut off by CYRUS, discovered the deceit; on which several of the nobility entered into a conspiracy, and assassinated the usurper in his palace.

DARIUS son of HYSTASPES, *A.M.* 3443.

The nobility then proceeded to the choice of a successor, and DARIUS son of HYSTASPES was elected. This prince married two of the daughters of CYRUS the GREAT. In the third year of his reign, he gave orders that the building of the temple of JERUSALEM should be carried on at the expence of the state, requiring the JEWISH priests to pray for him, and to denounce curses against all who should obstruct the work.]

The PERSIAN court being removed from BABYLON to SUSA, the former city revolted. DARIUS in the fifth year of his reign marched his army and besieged it. He met with but little success for 18 months: at length ZOPYRUS, one of his generals, cut off his own nose and ears, and then fled to the city, pretending that he had been thus mangled by order of DARIUS: this astonishing stratagem gained him the confidence of the BABYLONIANS, who readily entrusted him with the command of their troops in several sallies, and in a short time engaging them to confide entirely in him, he betrayed the city to DARIUS. When this prince

took

took possession of it, he caused 3000 citizens to be impaled, and the walls to be demolished.

DARIUS next invaded SCYTHIA with an army of 600,000 men; but the enemy retiring before the PERSIANS, drew them into a country covered with snow, where DARIUS lost great part of his army, without fighting, and with great difficulty made his retreat. The SCYTHIANS soon returned this visit, invaded THRACE, and plundered the country as far as the HELLESPONT. While DARIUS was engaged in his expedition against the SCYTHIANS, MEGABYSUS the PERSIAN governor of THRACE subdued the MACEDONIANS, and made them tributary to PERSIA.

He then invaded INDIA, and, as some historians say, made an entire conquest of all that country. He was soon after engaged in suppressing a rebellion of the IONIANS, who had drawn the ATHENIANS and other GRECIAN states into the plot; but the IONIANS, being deserted by all their allies, were entirely subdued. DARIUS resenting the injury done him by the ATHENIANS in joining the IONIANS, who had burnt the city of SARDIS, determined to invade GREECE by sea and land: he therefore sent an army under the command of MARDONIUS a young lord who had married his daughter; this fleet meeting with a storm in the EGEAN SEA, he lost 300 of his ships and 20,000 men, and the army being surprized by the THRACIANS, it was with great difficulty MARDONIUS made his retreat over the HELLESPONT into ASIA.

After this, DARIUS again invaded GREECE, utterly destroyed the city of ERETRIA in EUBÆA †, and made himself master of all the islands of the EGEAN SEA. He then marched towards ATHENS; the ATHENIANS sent to the LACEDEMONIANS to join them, but before they arrived they fought the famous battle of MARATHON ‡, in which MILTIADES the ATHENIAN general, tho' his forces did not amount to 10,000 men, not only repulsed the PERSIANS, but entirely defeated them; many thousands fell by the sword, and more perished in the sea, endeavouring to get on board their ships.

DARIUS

† An island belonging to GREECE.

‡ A town of ATTICA in GREECE.

DARIUS now made great preparations for invading GREECE in person, and reducing EGYPT which had also revolted, but died before his armies took the field, and was succeeded by his son XERXES.

XERXES, *A. M.* 3479.

This prince no sooner ascended the throne than he marched with a powerful army into EGYPT, and compelled that people to submit again to the dominion of PERSIA. To revenge the overthrow the PERSIANS had suffered at MARATHON, he made great preparations for conquering GREECE, and began his march with an army which some historians say amounted to three millions of men^s. LEONIDAS, one of the kings of SPARTA, defended the strait of THERMOPILÆ with 4,000 men. This strait, which is only 25 feet broad, lies between THESSALY and PHOCIS; and was thought the only passage by which the PERSIANS could enter ACHAIA by land. Here, after losing 20,000 men, XERXES was ready to despair of forcing his way, when a native of the country discovered to him a secret passage up the mountain which commanded the strait. A detachment went thither; and the SPARTANS seeing the PERSIANS above them, and finding it impossible to defend the post, LEONIDAS commanding the rest of his troops to retire, stay'd in the pass with only 300 men, which after making an obstinate defence were all cut to pieces except one man, who escaped to SPARTA, and was there condemned for cowardice.

The day the battle was fought at THERMOPILÆ, the GRECIANS with 400 sail obtained a victory at sea over the PERSIAN fleet of 1000 sail: the weather being stormy, above 200 of the PERSIAN fleet were cast away, and the GRECIANS falling upon them before their scattered ships were joined, obtained an easy victory at ARTEMISIUM a promontory of EUBÆA.

XERXES now dividing his army, sent one part to DELPHOS, where they plundered the temple of an immense treasure, and with the other he

^s Some think it more consistent to read three hundred thousand; and this number is probable, considering they carried their wives and children.

he marched to ATHENS, which finding abandoned by the inhabitants, he plundered and burnt it.

A PERSIAN fleet was soon after sent to SALAMIS in search of the GRECIANS, but the joint fleet of the ATHENIANS commanded by THEMISTOCLES, and of the LACEDEMONIANS by EURYBIADES, totally defeated the PERSIANS. XERXES was dispirited at the loss of this naval battle, and returned into ASIA, leaving MARDONIUS behind him with 300,000 men. The following year this army was entirely defeated near PLATEÆ †, and the PERSIAN general killed in the field of battle. The same day the GREEKS obtained another victory over the PERSIAN fleet.

XERXES now disgusted at foreign wars and averse to business, abandoned himself to his pleasures, and was murdered while sleeping in his bed.

ARTAXERXES, A.M. 3500.

ARTAXERXES the son of XERXES ascended the throne. In the beginning of this reign CIMON the son of MILTIADES, and general of the ATHENIANS, took several cities in THRACE, recovered and restored to their liberties most of the GRECIAN cities in the LESSER ASIA, obtained a signal victory over the PERSIAN fleet, defeated an army of 30,000 PERSIANS, and carried the plunder of it, which was extremely valuable, in triumph to ATHENS.

ARTAXERXES in order to make head against CIMON, made THEMISTOCLES, who had been banished by the ATHENIANS, general of his armies on that side; but THEMISTOCLES chose rather to die by a dose of poison than fight against his country.

About this time the EGYPTIANS revolted, and chose INARUS the prince of LIBYA their king; the ATHENIANS entered into an alliance with him against the PERSIANS, and sent to his assistance a fleet of 200 sail, which in conjunction with the EGYPTIAN navy ruined that of PERSIA. At land they defeated an army of 300,000 PERSIANS; but the

next

† A city of BOEOTIA, famous for the defeat of XERXES's army.

next year ARTAXERXES gained a decisive victory over the confederates, reduced the whole kingdom of EGYPT, made INARUS prisoner, and put him to death. This being contrary to the articles of capitulation made with the PERSIAN general MEGABYSUS, he retired to his government in SYRIA, raised a rebellion there, and defeated the forces that were sent against him, so that ARTAXERXES found it necessary to come to an agreement with him.

This was that ARTAXERXES, who by an express decree permitted the JEWS to rebuild the walls of JERUSALEM; and the seventy weeks mentioned by the prophet DANIEL, after which the Messiah was to appear upon the earth, are said to commence from the date of this decree.

CIMON afterwards defeated the PERSIANS both by sea and land, compelled them to accept of peace on these terms, that the GRECIAN cities in ASIA should enjoy their liberties, be governed by their own laws, and that the PERSIAN fleet should not enter the GRECIAN seas. ARTAXERXES died in the forty-fourth year of his reign, and was succeeded by his only lawful son XERXES II.

XERXES II. *A. M.* 3544.

ARTAXERXES having had several sons by his concubines, particularly SOGDIANUS, OCHUS, and ARSITES, the first entered into a conspiracy with one of the chief eunuchs, and murdered XERXES II. in his chamber, where he had fallen asleep, after a drunken debauch, forty-five days after his accession.

SOGDIANUS.

SOGDIANUS then usurped the throne, on which his brother OCHUS raised an army under pretence of revenging his brother XERXES's death; great numbers of the nobility followed his banners; OCHUS was proclaimed king, and SOGDIANUS being abandoned, surrendered himself to his brother, who put him to a cruel death, after having enjoyed the title of king little more than six months.

OCHUS, called DARIUS NOTHUS, *A. M.* 3544.

OCHUS ascended the throne, and changed his name to DARIUS. ARSITES, another of his brothers, disputing the crown with him, obtained two victories over him; but the GREEKS in his pay being corrupted, ARSITES was forced to submit, and surrendering himself was put to death, as was PISUTHNES governor of LYDIA, who afterwards endeavoured to make himself king of that province. Several others suffered the same punishment, particularly one of his eunuchs, who had the ambition to aspire to the throne.

In this reign the EGYPTIANS revolted and chose a king of their own, but DARIUS at length reduced EGYPT as well as MEDIA, which had also endeavoured to shake off the yoke of PERSIA. DARIUS died after a troublesome reign of 19 years, and left the crown to ARSACES his eldest son. To his younger son CYRUS he gave the LESSER ASIA, of which he had before been viceroy.

ARTAXERXES II, *A. M.* 3563.

ARSACES, on ascending the throne, took the name of ARTAXERXES, and from his extraordinary memory was by the GREEKS called MNEMON*. Under this prince happened the famous retreat of XENOPHON thro' most of the provinces of the empire, with only ten thousand GREEKS. He reigned thirty-six years, and was ninety-four years old when he died, being worn out with the distractions of his family, and the frequent revolts of his subjects in the latter part of his reign.

OCHUS, *A. M.* 3599.

OCHUS, son of ARTAXERXES, concealed his father's death, and administered the government in his name near ten months; during which time he made a decree in the name of his father, for declaring himself king. When he found he was sufficiently established, he took upon him
the

* Rememberer.

the government in his own name. He was very cruel, but a valiant prince: he recovered EGYPT, subdued SYRIA and CYPRUS, and was at last slain by BAGOAS, one of the eunuchs of his chamber, who had the principal share in the administration the latter end of his reign.

ARSES, *A. M.* 3625.

The power of the eunuch BAGOAS was so great, that he placed his late master's son ARSES on the throne; and four years after, finding that prince disposed to call him to an account, he caused him and his whole family to be assassinated, and advanced DARIUS, surnamed CODOMANUS, to the throne.

DARIUS III, surnamed CODOMANUS, *A. M.* 3629.

DARIUS, governor of ARMENIA, and cousin-german to OCHUS, was made sole monarch of PERSIA. BAGOAS still expecting to have the entire administration of the government in DARIUS's reign, as he had in the reigns of several of his predecessors, finding this prince resolved to take the power into his hands, prepared a dose of poison for him, who being acquainted of the design, compelled him to drink it himself.

DARIUS had a beautiful person, was an accomplished prince, and the delight of his subjects. He had the prospect of enjoying a happy reign, when the GRECIANS being all united, determined to revenge themselves on the PERSIANS for the ravages they had suffered from them. They chose PHILIP king of MACEDON their generalissimo in the intended war; but he being murdered before every thing was ready, he was succeeded by his son ALEXANDER then 20 years of age.

ALEXANDER the GREAT, *A. M.* 3631.

This prince having settled his affairs in GREECE, marched into ASIA with 30,000 foot, and 5000 horse; with this force he passed the GRANICUS^b, though it was defended by 100,000 PERSIANS, and auxiliary

B 2

GREEKS;

^b A river in NATOLIA.

GREEKS; and having gained the opposite shore, he soon obtained a complete victory. After which SARDIS, EPHEBUS, and many other cities opened their gates to the conqueror, and MITHRIDATES king of PONTUS, with several other princes of ASIA, submitted to him, and joined him with their forces; his army daily increased as he advanced, so that the PERSIAN empire was not conquered by the 35000 GREEKS only.

ALEXANDER the next campaign possessed himself of an advantageous pass in CILICIA; posting his troops, so as to prevent his being surrounded by the numerous host of the PERSIANS. DARIUS put himself at the head of a formidable army and marched to meet the MACEDONIANS: he had 20,000 GRECIAN forces in his service; but his PERSIAN horse having no room to act, he was defeated; and an incredible slaughter ensued. The PERSIAN camp was taken, and among the rest of the prisoners were the mother, the wife, and some of the children of DARIUS.

From the death of CYRUS the GREAT, to the invasion of PERSIA by ALEXANDER the GREAT, are about 209 years. During this period, the PERSIANS confiding in their numbers, and neglecting the arts of war, became the more easy conquest of the GRECIANS, by whom this formidable monarchy was subverted.

CHAP. II.

The GRECIAN empire over the PERSIANS. The ROMAN conquest. The re-establishment of PERSIA by ARTAXERXES. The TURKISH government in PERSIA, to the re-establishment of that kingdom in the line of the SEFFIES.

GRECIAN EMPIRE, A. M. 3635.

PERSIA now became a part of the GRECIAN empire, which was too formidable and extensive to last long under one head.

ALEXANDER died, A. M. 3643, eight years after his conquest, and this and others of his vast acquisitions were divided among the partners of his victories.

SYRIA formerly part of the PERSIAN monarchy, continued in the family of SELEUCUS the son of ANTIOCHUS, one of ALEXANDER's captains, about 250 years.

ROMAN CONQUEST, *A.M.* 3913.

From the conquest of ALEXANDER to that of the ROMANS, are computed 270 years.

Out of PERSIA arose the kingdom of PARTHIA, which included the southern provinces of PERSIA, and the city now called ISFAHAN was the metropolis of that kingdom, situated in the heart of the present PERSIA. This kingdom subsisted 470 years, which leaves the æra of the world, and comes 228 years into that more glorious of the birth of the Saviour of the world, when ARTAXERXES the first king of his race revived the kingdom of PERSIA, which included PARTHIA.

ARTAXERXES, *A.D.* 228.

The kingdom of PERSIA thus restored by ARTAXERXES subsisted upwards of 400 years, when it was conquered by the SARACENS, and became a part of the SARACEN empire.

SARACEN EMPIRE, *A.D.* 628¹.

The ARABIANS under the SARACEN empire, the TURKS, TARTARS, and ARMENIANS, alternately possessed or divided PERSIA for 769 years, but this period seems to be left in great obscurity.

TAMERLANE, *A.D.* 1397.

TAMERLANE chief of the OUSBEG TARTARS conquered BAJAZET, and subduing PERSIA prepared the way for another race. TAMERLANE died in 1402, leaving a succession of kings till 1499, when the first of the SEFFIES or prophets began to reign.

The

¹ Six years after MAHOMMED, 622 of CHRIST, the first of MAHOMMED. The MAHOMMEDAN æra is reckoned by lunar years.

The SEFFIES, *A.D.* 1499¹.

This family cannot be said to have existed longer than 227 years, when MAHOMMED chief of KANDAHAR invaded PERSIA, *A.D.* 1722. As the line of the SEFFIES includes the unfortunate reign of SHAH SULTAN HUSSEIN, we shall give the out lines of their respective characters according to the best accounts.

ISMAEL, *A.D.* 1499.

SCHEICH EIDAR a descendant of ALI, who had distinguished himself for his piety and contempt of worldly glory; separating from the TURKISH doctors, set up a new religion. He was murdered by RUSTAN, and left behind him three sons; the two eldest fled to avoid their father's fate, and ISMAEL the youngest, who was then a child, was snatched from the danger by his father's friends, and secretly educated in the province of GHILAN, in the principles of the sect of SCHEICH EIDAR; and as he grew up, he discovered a great zeal to support them. He was handsome, eloquent and courageous.

Those who by persecution, had been obliged to abandon the religious tenets of his father, flocked to him. By their assistance he took several places, and led his forces to TAVRIS, where the gates being opened to him, he entered in triumph. ALVANTE the king, who had rendered himself odious to the people, flying at his approach, he became master of the city without drawing his sword.

ALVANTE and his brother, who had been at variance, and engaged in a civil war, were now reconciled; while they were marching to join their forces, ISMAEL pursued the fugitive ALVANTE, and defeated him in a battle, in which he was killed. He afterwards obtained two victories over the brother of ALVANTE.

ISMAEL having possession of the throne, marched against the IBERIANS^m, the ALBANIANSⁿ, and the TARTARS, and obliged them to pay tribute

¹ Some accounts make this 1508.
now called SHIRVAN.

^m Now called the GEORGIANS.

ⁿ ALBANIA is

tribute to PERSIA, which for some years they had refused. He then gained a signal victory over the king of SAMARCAND, and afterwards engaged in a war with the sultan of EGYPT and the grand signior.

ISMAEL was reputed one of the greatest kings that ever ruled in the east. The PERSIANS were prepossessed with such an high esteem for him, that they considered him as a man altogether divine; therefore when they fought under his command, they braved dangers, and even death with the greatest intrepidity. He died at 45 years of age, and left four sons, of whom TÆHMAS the eldest, of 18 years old, succeeded to his throne.

TÆHMAS, *A.D.* 1525.

TÆHMAS had three brothers, each of whom had an appanage settled on them by ISMAEL their father, but of these only one died a natural death, one being killed for a revolt, and the other for fear he should revolt.

TÆHMAS, tho' he had neither the capacity nor the intrepidity of his father, was a very able soldier; but so avaricious, that he committed very atrocious acts of injustice, for the sake of the most trifling profit; and so averse to business, that he abandoned the government entirely to his ministers, and devoting himself to ease and pleasure, shut himself up in his harram for many years, without going abroad. After having reigned nine years, without being engaged in any considerable war, he had the mortification to see his kingdom invaded by the TURKS, in which expedition, SULIMAN the TURKISH emperor made himself master of TAVRIS, took BABYLON, and caused himself to be crowned king of PERSIA. After this conquest, all the cities of ASSYRIA opened their gates to SULIMAN, who had also reduced COURDISTAN and DIARBECKIR. But TÆHMAS at length having laid waste the country, the enemy's army was almost starved, and obliged to leave PERSIA. He gave the command of his troops to an experienced general, and pursued the TURKS, who being surprized in the disorder of a retreat, the PERSIANS gained a complete victory. PERSIA now enjoyed peace for fourteen years, when

SULIMAN, *A. D.* 1548, took the field with 200,000 men. TÆHMAS with 100,000 men and 10,000 PORTUGUESE, who at that time were very powerful in ASIA, engaged them the following year, and gained a complete victory, 130,000 TURKS being killed in the field of battle.

After this loss SULIMAN concluded a peace with TÆHMAS, and affairs remained in that state during 28 years, when the PERSIAN monarch died aged about 68. At his death he nominated his third son for his successor, but the grandees, not approving his choice, offered the crown to KHODA-BENDE the eldest son; and he refusing it, they gave it to ISMAEL the second son of TÆHMAS.

ISMAEL II. *A. D.* 1575.

This prince was then 43 years of age, and was prisoner at the same time when his eldest brother KHODA-BENDE refused to accept the diadem. He delighted in war, and had been several years confined for the fault of raising troops and opposing the enterprizes of the TURKS, who contrary to the truces concluded with them, made frequent incursions into PERSIA. TÆHMAS though he shut up his son ISMAEL in prison, endeavoured to make his life as easy as possible, by sending the most beautiful women to him; but ISMAEL refused their embraces, declaring that for himself he was easy under his imprisonment; but could not tell whether he should have the fortitude to bear with the confinement, should he have children, and that he had rather have none, than see them miserable.

ISMAEL began his reign by putting to death that brother, to whom his father had left the crown. And being desirous to discover which of the grandees had advised his father to keep him so long a prisoner, caused a report to be made that he was dead, when learning by his spies what had been said of him, he appeared again; some of his domestic enemies he ordered to be seized, others who fled with the forces under them to the extremities of the kingdom, he pursued. The TURKS alarmed at his motions, took the field, and made incursions into his dominions. ISMAEL being enraged at his disappointments, put those to death whom
he

he most suspected, and prepared for a war with his foreign enemies ; but while these preparations were going forwards he was poisoned, and died after a reign of two years.

MAHOMMED KHODA-BENDE, *A.D.* 1577.

This prince, who resided in the province of KHORASAN, and had refused to accept the crown, after many solicitations, yielded, and was proclaimed king. Very different characters are given of him : some writers asserting that his desire was to imitate those kings who had the interest and honour of their country most at heart ; and others, that his whole delight was to shut himself up in his harram, and spend his time with his women. But the latter account in all probability is false : it is true he had weak eyes, occasioned either by a defect in nature, or by a fit of sickness ; and this alone probably made him shut himself up in his palace ; but the transactions of this reign give no indications of the kingdom being governed by a very weak and effeminate prince.

Three of his brothers, who on his ascending the throne fled to the TURKISH frontiers, he allured to court, with fair promises, and then put them to death. He obtained several very signal victories over the TURKS, who also took some towns from him, but not without the loss of many of their forces.

He reigned eight years, and left three sons ; the two first reigned only a few months, but the third, ABAS the GREAT, governed PERSIA for many years.

EMIR HEMSE, first son of MAHOMMED
KHODA-BENDE, in 1585.

This being KHODA-BENDE's eldest son, he succeeded his father, but ISMAEL his younger brother, caused him to be murdered in his chamber by assassins, who deceived the guards under the disguise of women.

ISMAEL III, second son of MAHOMMED
KHODA-BENDE, in 1585.

ISMAEL the III^d no sooner got possession of the throne by the murder of his elder brother, than he thought to secure the possession of it by dispatching ABAS the youngest; but being prevented by his governor, measures were taken to remove ISMAEL. This business was entrusted to his barber, who while he was shaving him cut his throat. The lords then present, who were accomplices in the crime, instantly killed the barber, to prevent a discovery. The fratricide ISMAEL died the same year as his brother, and ABAS took possession of the crown.

ABAS the GREAT, *A. D.* 1585.

This prince is generally esteemed one of the greatest kings that ever reigned in PERSIA; his memory is to this day held in the highest veneration; and several noble works of antiquity yet remain, some of which I have mentioned, as the cause-way on the coast of the CASPIAN. He was but eighteen years old when he began his reign, and had all the qualifications of a great prince, except one: for his inhumanity tarnished the glory of his good qualities. MURCHED-KOULI-KHAN, who in his youth had been his governor, and to whom he owed the crown, pretending to controul him, he caused him to be killed in his presence, and the next day, all the friends and relations of this man, to whom he was under such high obligations, suffered the same fate.

The TURKS, since the time of ISMAEL II, had conquered above 150 leagues in length from north to south, and in breadth from the western coast of the CASPIAN to the BLACK SEA; also BABYLON, with MESOPOTAMIA and ASSYRIA. ABAS soon recovered the PERSIAN dominions; made great conquests in TURKEY, and recovered ORMUS from the PORTUGUESE. He gave a martial spirit to the people; polish'd their manners; and applying himself to civil government, brought the governors of the provinces, who were before in a great measure independent, into subjection.

But

But in the midst of his glory, his reign was rendered unhappy by an unjust suspicion of his children. He had but three, of whom he caused the eyes of the two youngest to be put out. His eldest SEFFIE-MYRZA, whom he had reserved for the crown, was a young man of great virtue, and filial affection: he even discovered to his father a conspiracy which had been formed against him: but notwithstanding this, giving way to his suspicions, the SHAH ordered him to be put to death. SEFFIE-MYRZA was no sooner murdered by his command, than he repented, shut himself up in the dark for ten days together, shed incessant tears, fasted and mourned for a year, and never after wore any ornament.

To revenge himself on the PERSIAN lords who had made him jealous of his son, he ordered them to be invited to a feast, and mixing poison with their wine, saw them with a savage pleasure expire before his face. And the officer who had readily obeyed his commands, to bring him the head of his son, he commanded to cut off the head of his own son: when he brought it in his hand, and told the king that the reflection of what he had done would bring him to his grave; ABAS replied, that he was now capable of judging of his grief, and bid him comfort himself with the thought, that in this particular he was not inferior to his sovereign. ABAS the GREAT died at sixty-three years of age, and the forty-fifth of his reign, and nominated his grandson for his successor, ordering him to take the name of SEFFIE, which was that of his injured father, whose death ABAS so much regreted.

SEFFIE, *A. D.* 1629.

It is said of this prince that he came into the world with his hands bloody, and that his grandfather ABAS the GREAT, had from thence predicted that he would live to bathe his hands in the blood of his subjects. This prediction was but too plainly verified: for he began his reign by ordering the eyes of his only brother to be cut out; and cast from a rock his two uncles, who had been blinded by order of SHAH ABAS. The instances of his cruelty were innumerable: he buried alive forty-four women of his harram, tho' when he was not hunting or over his cups

he used to pass his time with them. He interfered so little in the affairs of the government, that the PERSIANS would have scarcely perceived they had a king, had it not been for the frequent instances of barbarity which stained his reign with blood.

Before the time of SHAH ABAS, the children of the PERSIAN kings appeared abroad, and had governments allotted them on their coming of age; but after the death of SEFFIE MYRZA, ABAS entirely altered that method, and SEFFIE his grandson was educated in the harram, which afterwards became a rule for the education of the kings sons. SEFFIE being shut up in the harram, where he had enjoyed no conversation, except that of the eunuchs, was taught nothing more than to read and write, and was allowed no other diversion, than shooting with a bow, and riding in the gardens on an ass: it is therefore no wonder that he was so unfit to govern. This prince by his own folly lost KANDAHAR and BABYLON, two of the most import places on his frontiers.

He had ordered a eunuch to run an iron over the eyes of his son ABAS; the purport of this commission was well understood, but the eunuch having compassion on the prince, and recollecting that the king had no other heir to the throne, he made use of a cold iron; and the prince acted the blind man so well, that the king really believed he had lost his sight. When SEFFIE saw death approaching, and imagined that by depriving his son of sight, he had deprived himself of an heir to the crown, he was extremely afflicted, and expressed with what satisfaction he should expire if he had a son to succeed him. The eunuch assured him that he had a secret to restore sight to the prince. Transported with this expectation, the king sent one of the grandees with the eunuch to bring the prince to him, when finding that he could see, his joy, it is said, prolonged his life till the next year. He reigned 12 years.

ABAS II, A.D. 1642.

This prince was but thirteen years of age when he began his reign. He was of a disposition the reverse of that of his father, for notwithstanding his being too much addicted to wine, and committing some
acts

acts of cruelty, he was one of the best kings of the SEFFIES. He loved justice, and had no mercy on the public officers who abused his authority, and oppressed his subjects. He was kind to strangers, and openly protected the christians, declaring that he thought God alone was judge and master of the conscience; that as for himself he was only the governor of externals; and all his subjects of what religion soever, being equally members of the state, he owed equal justice to them all.

His troops were numerous: he recovered KANDAHAR which had been lost in his father's reign: and found the secret of acquiring a good treasury without oppressing his people. He reigned 24 years, and after languishing four months under the venereal disease, he died, leaving behind him two sons, of whom the eldest SEFFIE MYRZA succeeded to the throne.

SEFFIE named SULIMAN, *A.D.* 1666.

SEFFIE was remarkable for his great strength: but he had not been seated on the throne above two years, when his health being much impaired by drunkenness and women, his physicians were at a loss what remedies to apply in order to restore it; and therefore laying the blame on the stars, pretended that the astrologers had not chosen a happy day for his coronation. This ridiculous opinion had its weight; the king was crowned a second time, and took the name of SULIMAN.

Under this prince, PERSIA began to decline to that low state in which she now languishes. His reign was remarkable for nothing but a slavish indolence, a savage and inhuman cruelty. When he was intoxicated either by wine or anger, he often times ordered the hands, feet, ears and nose of those near him to be cut off, their eyes to be plucked out, or their lives to be sacrificed, as if it was his pastime. In this reign was born NADIR KOULI the great usurper of PERSIA. SEFFIE reigned 28 years, leaving two sons, of whom HUSSEIN succeeded to the throne, *A.D.* 1694.

Having thus given a chronological list of the PERSIAN kings, we proceed now to a more particular account of the reign of the unhappy prince sultan HUSSEIN, as preparatory to the history of NADIR.

PART

PART II.
 THE
 REVOLUTIONS OF PERSIA,
 FROM THE
 BEGINNING OF THE PRESENT CENTURY
 TO THE
 DEATH OF MIR-VAIS
 IN THE YEAR 1715.

CHAP. III.

Origin of the different tribes of the AFGHANS, with a general view of the revolutions of their country from the year 1100 to 1701.

PERSIA never enjoyed a more perfect tranquillity, than in the beginning of the present century. The treaties she had concluded with her neighbours were perfectly observed, and secured her against any foreign invasions: whilst the effeminacy and luxury of her inhabitants, the ordinary consequences of a long peace, left no room to apprehend any danger from the ambition of her own subjects. This monarchy, which had suffered so many revolutions in past ages, seemed to be settled on a solid foundation, when the news of its subversion surprized the whole world.

The authors of this amazing catastrophe, were a people, hardly known even to their own sovereigns, and have now acquired a reputation only by the fame of those nations which they brought under their subjection. These people, who are comprized under the general denomination of

AFGHANS,

AFGHANS, are divided into three principal tribes, who like most oriental nations, derive their genealogy from NOAH. According to their relations, " JAPHET had three sons, ARMEN, AFGHAN, and CARDVEL; " the former two continued in ARMENIA, which takes its name from " the eldest; as CARDVEL, which forms a part of GEORGIA, is so called " from the youngest, who settled in that province. The families of " ARMEN and AFGHAN having greatly multiplied in process of time, the " descendants of the latter quitted their country, and went to inhabit " the foot of SULIMAN COUH^o, a chain of mountains, which separates " the province of KANDAHAR from the MOGHOL's empire."

This nation was formerly divided into two principal tribes; one of which lived on the mountains under the general name of AFGHAN; and the other extended itself on the plains, and was distinguished by the name of BALOUCHE: but in the reign of ISMAEL SAMANI, *viz.* towards the end of the ninth century, a numerous colony of AFGHANS having quitted the country of KANDAHAR, a third tribe was formed in HASARAI, the eastern part of HERAT. The latter took the name of ABDOLLEES, and soon after embraced the MAHOMMEDAN religion, which they communicated to the rest of their nation, who, like themselves, had till that time professed the MAGIAN religion^p.

In the beginning of the eleventh century, the tribe of CLIGI^q, the most numerous and powerful of the three, was almost intirely destroyed by the celebrated MAHOMMED, founder of the dynasty of the GAZNAVIDS*. This prince had established the seat of his empire at GHOZNAVI^r, in order to be nearer the INDIES, which he intended to conquer. But having been obliged, in one of his successful campaigns, to return suddenly to his capital, he took only a small body of troops with him, and ordered the rest to follow by slow marches. His army was returning in
separate

^o The mountain of SOLOMAN: this is the CAUCASUS mentioned in the conquests of ALEXANDER. But the great mountain which runs from ARMENIA into INDIA, properly takes the name of CAUCASUS on the western coast of the CASPIAN; as that part of it which is on the southern coast, and runs eastward, goes under the name of TAURUS. ^p Worshippers of fire. ^q A division of the tribe of AFGHANS, who inhabited the mountain SULIMAN-COUH. ^{*} They derived their name from GAZNA a city in KHORASAN, and paid homage to the khalifs of BABYLON. ^r A city in KANDAHAR.

separate detachments, loaded with the spoils of the nations they had subdued, when the temptation of booty raised him new enemies. The CLIGIS knowing that his troops must pass thro' their mountains, waited for them in the defiles, and successively defeated several different bodies of MAHOMMED's army.

These AFGHANS were however no strangers to the valour and power of the prince whom they had thus offended; but as the winter was near, they concluded that he would not attempt to revenge himself till towards the spring; when they determined to retire into that part of their mountains which was least accessible: and if their enemy could reach them there, they should at least be able to oppose him the better. This reasoning was plausible enough; but MAHOMMED eluded the difficulty: for he no sooner received the news of the defeat of his army, than he assembled the best of his troops, and notwithstanding the rigour of the season, he entered the country of KANDAHAR with such expedition, that the news of his march had not reached the enemy. The CLIGIS having been compelled by the severity of the winter, their mountains being extremely cold, descended into the plains, where they divided their plunder. MAHOMMED attacked them briskly on every side, and made so terrible a slaughter, that their whole race was nearly extirpated.

The country was at length re-peopled by a small number of families, who had made their escape into the mountains, but it was so thinly inhabited for some ages, that scarce any mention was made of these people under the following dynasty, and it was not till the reign of TEMUR-BEG^s, that they appeared as numerous and formidable as they had been before their memorable defeat.

The ABDOLLEES having quitted the country of KANDAHAR 200 years before, were not involved in the same calamity. Being free from any foreign yoke, they were yet governed by their own laws, till towards the beginning of the seventeenth century. The OUSBEG TARTARS having then made an irruption into the province of HERAT, this tribe, tho' amounting to 30,000 families, was obliged to have recourse to ABAS, who

^s TAMERLANE.

who then sat on the throne of PERSIA. This prince, who by his conquests had already merited the surname of GREAT, took them under his protection, and putting himself at the head of his troops, marched against the usurpers, and obliged them in a very short time to retire. Whether it was owing to gratitude, or to necessity, the ABDOLLEES, who had been till then independent, made themselves tributary to their deliverer. The only condition they insisted on was, that the government of their country should be conferred on none but an ABDOLLEE chosen from among the chief men of the nation.

KANDAHAR was at that time under the protection of the MOGHOL. ABAS the GREAT having given some umbrage to the sons of MYRZA-BOYRAM, governor of the province, these young lords entered into a secret treaty with AKBAR emperor of HINDOSTAN^t, and submitting to his government, opened their gates to a body of 5000 horse, which this monarch sent to their assistance.

AKBAR kept possession of this province during his life; but upon the succession of his son GEANGHIR^u, SHAH ABAS returned thither with an army of 30,000 men, and notwithstanding the vigorous resistance of ASSOOF KHAN, he made himself master of the capital, the government of which he committed to one of his generals. The CLIGIS followed the fate of their country, and the ABDOLLEES having submitted, the whole nation^w was united once more under the dominion of PERSIA. In this situation things continued for many years; till ALI-MERDAN-KHAN having by his immense riches excited the jealousy and avarice of the cruel SHAH SEFFIE, grandson and successor of ABAS the GREAT, was obliged, for his own preservation, to deliver up the fortress and country to the MOGHOL. SHAH SEFFIE, it is presumed, recovered and again lost this kingdom: Be that as it may, it fell once more into the hands of the INDIANS, at which time the CLIGIS were not less than 50,000 families, and formed the

^t The proper name of the MOGHOL empire; from the word HINDOS, which signifies a swarthy people.

^u This word signifies the conqueror of the world.

^w The BALOUCHES having by their long separation lost the name of AFGHAN, it is presumed were not included.

the principal part of its inhabitants: but they soon had reason to be dissatisfied with their new masters. These people, according to their ancient custom, lived for the most part in tents: their ordinary occupation was feeding their flocks; but such as went into towns, were employed in the most menial and laborious offices. These circumstances, and the tribute which they paid for the right of pasturage, rendered them so contemptible, that the name of CLIGI became proverbial of reproach among the INDIANS of KANDAHAR.

Of all offences contempt is the hardest to be forgiven. These AF- GHANS not finding among people of the same religion as themselves, those sentiments of humanity which had been shewn them by the PER- SIANS, whom they considered as heretics, resolved once more to change masters. With this view they made a secret deputation to the court of PERSIA, to invite SHAH ABAS II, to take possession of the province.

The situation of the province of KANDAHAR, renders it a strong bar- rier between the empires of PERSIA and INDIA; and its capital * passes for the most considerable fortress in ASIA. These circumstances excited the ambition of SHAH ABAS; who immediately raised troops on every side, and putting himself at the head of a great army, after a siege of two months, he took possession of the city by capitulation in 1650. SHAH JEHAN, who was then emperor of INDIA, endeavouring to recover his loss, sent two of his sons, who successively laid siege to this town. The first time ROUP, one of the RAJAHS †, planted his standards on the wall; and the second the EUROPEANS, who had the care of the artillery, made a breach that was practicable: but the little vigor shewn by the PERSIAN lords in the MOGHOL's pay, on the first occasion, and the jealousy of AURING ZEBE ‡ against DARAH SHAH § his eldest brother, on the second, rendered both these expeditions abortive. It is said, that five sons of kings perished in the course of this war.

Thus

* KAND-DAAR signifies the habitation of security. Some historians think it is one of the seven cities founded by ALEXANDER, and that the name of KANDAR, which is given him by the old PER- SIAN histories, is an abridgment of that of ESKANDAR, by which this conqueror is known to the eastern nations.

† A prince and chief of a district in INDIA.

‡ Signifies ornament of

the throne.

§ DARA in the PERSIAN language signifies sovereign. The LATINS render this name by that of DARIUS.

Thus by the repeated defeats of the MOGHOL's troops, and the intestine troubles which soon after broke out in INDIA, the possession of the province of KANDAHAR was secured to PERSIA. SHAH ABAS being now desirous of acknowledging the services which the AFGHANS had done him in these different expeditions, distributed rewards among their chiefs, and reduced the tribute which had been annually paid by those people. They continued faithful to their new masters till the end of SULIMAN's reign, and even during the first years of that of his son HUSSEIN, that is, so long as they were treated as subjects, and not as slaves: but the cruelty and avarice of the PERSIAN governors having alienated the peoples minds; in the beginning of the present century the AFGHANS were once more ripe for a revolt.

C H A P. IV.

Character of GURGHIN-KHAN prince of GEORGIA. He is made governor of KANDAHAR, and oppresses that province. Complaints of the inhabitants. GURGHIN-KHAN sends MIR-VAIS to court as a suspected person. Character of MIR-VAIS. Description of the court of ISFAHAN. Origin of the divisions and parties in PERSIA.

THE indolence and effeminacy of the PERSIAN court was now arrived to a great height, but SHAH HUSSEIN and his ministers were in some degree awakened by the news, that the AFGHANS were disposed to a revolt: whilst they were thinking how to extinguish those sparks of rebellion, which might ere long blaze into a flame, the court was alarmed by a new circumstance. The MOGHOL not being able to forget that KANDAHAR formerly constituted a part of his dominions, had sent ambassadors to demand the restitution of that province, and there was reason to fear, lest the male-contents should favour that monarch in the enterprize, which he seemed to meditate.

There was then at ISFAHAN a prince of the family of BAGRATHIONI, which has often given sovereigns to GEORGIA. GURGHIN-KHAN, for

so he was commonly called, having been raised to the dignity of VALI^b of his province, had lately tried to assert the independency of his ancestors. He had even ventured to make a stand in TEFLIS^c against the PERSIAN armies; but being abandoned by most of the grandees of the country, who were bribed by the court, he soon came in person to make his submission to the king. Under a prince of less lenity, a step of this kind would have proved his destruction: but SHAH HUSSEIN, who had stood engaged for him at his circumcision, when he renounced the religion of his ancestors, being struck with an action that expressed so much confidence in his goodness, not only forgave what was past, but loaded him with favours, and confirmed him in all his governments.

The court being distressed what measures to pursue, laid hold of this opportunity to employ a prince, whose valour and other military virtues might render him dangerous in any other province. His brother LEVANKHAN was sent in quality of his lieutenant into GEORGIA, and GURGHINKHAN, who, beside the government of this province, had that of KHERMANIA^d, was nominated also governor of KANDAHAR; and as such was commissioned to pacify the troubles that might arise, and to watch over the security of that frontier. This general spared no pains to put his orders in execution: for this purpose, he raised an army of 20,000 PERSIANS, and having reinforced it with a body of GEORGIANS, he made forced marches towards KANDAHAR, when the very news of his approach dispersed the rebels.

So sudden a calm gave him some suspicion: he was not satisfied with having suppressed the insurrection, but applied his thoughts how to root it up. With this view, he made a diligent enquiry after the authors of the past troubles, and being induced from the severity of his disposition, to think that these people would never be completely subjected without oppression, he abandoned them to the discretion of his army.

It is hardly credible to what excess the violence and cruelty of the troops was carried on this occasion. The chiefs of tribes, and the simple shepherds,

^b VALI, a viceroy descended more immediately from the sovereigns of the country over which he presides. ^c Capital of PERSIAN GEORGIA, on a branch of the KURA. ^d Generally]

wrote CARMANIA.

shepherds, were equally in danger of their lives. They saw their tents and horses taken from them, without daring to complain. Women were publicly snatched from their husbands, and young virgins found no shelter in the arms of their mothers. Such horrid licentiousness increasing every day, the AFGHANS had private meetings, and sent a deputation to court, to complain of the tyranny under which they groaned. Those deputies set out unknown to GURGHIN-KHAN, and arrived safe at ISFAHAN; but this governor's friends having soon discovered the motive of their journey, prevented all access to the SHAH, in such a manner, that they were obliged to wait for the time when there was no possibility of hindering them from having audience.

According to an ancient custom, the kings of PERSIA always appear in public at the vernal equinox, when even the meanest of their subjects have free access. The AFGHANS embraced this opportunity to present their complaints: the petition which they brought with them was signed by the chiefs of the several tribes; it contained a very lively picture of the miseries they suffered, and would undoubtedly have moved SHAH HUSSEIN, who was naturally of a mild disposition, if the friends of GURGHIN-KHAN had not stifled those favourable impressions, and engaged the prince to dismiss those deputies as male-contented, unworthy of the royal clemency.

GURGHIN-KHAN having been informed of what passed, was not long before he shewed his resentment. The AFGHANS of KANDAHAR are divided into several tribes^d, of ten or twelve thousand families each. MIRVAIS^e, a chief of one of those tribes, was also one of the most powerful persons of his nation: his office of CALENTAR^f added weight to his credit: but his birth, his generosity, and a certain graceful and popular air, with some indications of an ambitious spirit, were the cause of his being suspected as the author of the past disturbances. The KHAN in order

^d Which the TARTARS call HORDAS.

^e Sometimes wrote MIR-UEIS, which signifies in ARABIC prince lion-whelp. The title of EMIR, of which MIR is an abbreviation, is conferred also on the CHERIFFS, successors of MAHOMMED; but every EMIR is not a CHERIFF. There are some who are christians, such as those of the DRUSES and the MARONISTS; these last are so named from MARON their head, and inhabited mount LEBANUS.

^f CALENTAR signifies the greatest. This officer is however charged with collecting of taxes, and as already noted, sometimes acts as a sub-governor. Vol. I. p. 23.

order to revenge himself of his enemies, and at the same time by some signal piece of policy to over-awe the AFGHANS, ordered MIR-VAIS to be seized and sent to ISFAHAN; informing the court at the same time, that he was a turbulent man whom they ought by all means to secure; that he was the only author of the past commotions, and of such a disposition as was likely to foment new troubles, which might hereafter be of dangerous consequence to the monarchy: a remarkable instance of sagacity, which was afterwards justified by the event.

GURGHIN-KHAN having thus removed the only person, in whom he discovered all the qualifications necessary for the head of a party, began to be no longer afraid of the enterprizes of the MOGHOL, or of the murmurings of the AFGHANS. He therefore put a garrison in the capital, and, satisfied with keeping his GEORGIANS about his person, disbanded the rest of his army.

MIR-VAIS, far from being dejected by his disgrace, thought of drawing some advantage from it, by endeavouring to get a thorough knowledge of a court which was made the place of his confinement. The character of SHAH HUSSEIN⁸ was too remarkable to escape him. This prince was born with that placid disposition, which borders on weakness, and consequently does not deserve the name of virtue. He had a strong attachment to his religion, and might be denominated an honest man, but so excessively indolent, and immoderately addicted to women and wine, as to be incapable of governing; thus unworthy of being a real, he was only a nominal king. It is easy to conceive then that the guardians of his pleasures were his favourites, and a council composed of the principal eunuchs of the seraglio, were the depositaries of the supreme power. This council was established by SHAH SULTMAN towards the latter end of his reign, who not content with rendering it superior to that of the antient form of administration, at his death gave it the power, in conjunction with the great officers of the kingdom, of chusing which of his sons they

⁸ CANTEMIR-HOSPÖDAR of MOLDAVIA, who fled for shelter into the territories of the CZAR, in 1715 drew the following character of SHAH HUSSEIN. "He is forty years old; of an indolent disposition; intirely abandoned to his pleasures; terminating all his disputes with the TURKS, the INDIANS, and his other neighbours, by the interposition of his governors, and by dint of money."

they thought fittest to succeed him. It was by means of the votes and credit of these eunuchs, that HUSSEIN was preferred, on this occasion, to his brother ABAS-MYRZA^h: yet far from taking umbrage at the power which had raised him to the throne, contrary to the policy of arbitrary kings, thought only of strengthening the authority of that tribunal; whether it was that he followed merely the impulse of a grateful mind, without attending to any other duty; or finding himself incapable of holding the reins of government, he was glad to ease himself of a burthen, too heavy indeed for a prince of his character.

This senate thus invested with the supreme authority, were consequently the only disposers of the royal favours and employments. Merit became an empty sound; all offices and dignities were given to those who paid the highest price; money decided every thing; and the immense riches which were accumulated by this means, seemed rather to whet than to glut the avarice of those base ministers. Every part of the state felt the effects of this disorder. The troops being discouraged by ill discipline, and worse pay, served with reluctance. Robbers infested the high-ways, and interrupted commerce. Place-men, impoverished by the purchase of their offices, tyrannized over the people, and were rapacious with impunity; in fine, justice was publicly sold in the very capital of the empire.

SHAH HUSSEIN was perhaps the only person in his kingdom, that was ignorant of the disorder of the government. As he was buried in the pleasures of the harramⁱ, the cries of the oppressed could not reach his ear. The eunuchs had in a great measure brought the feudatory princes of the empire under their subjection, by investing the younger brothers with the sovereignty, in prejudice to the elder; and as the grandees of the court were, like the rest of the nation, divided into two factions, they received no umbrage, but paid an implicit obedience to this tribunal, which triumphed over the public calamity.

In

^h MYRZA, an abbreviation of EMIR-ZADE, which in PERSIAN signifies son of the prince. The title of MYRZA put after the proper name, signifies a prince of the blood; but put before it, signifies writer; and is also a proper name, as MYRZA-MAHOMMED. See Vol. I.

ⁱ Harram, signifies prohibited to men. The womens apartment in PERSIA, INDIA and TURKEY.

In order to discover the origin of these divisions, we must trace matters as high as the reign of SHAH ABAS I^k. This prince, whose great grand-father had usurped the throne, and who had lately added several provinces to his dominions, perceived that he could not long depend on the fidelity of his natural-born subjects, no more than on the several nations whom he had brought under subjection. He endeavoured therefore to set them at variance, that he might support his sovereignty by being their arbitrator. With this view, he peopled one half of every city and village of his empire with colonies chosen from among the nations most opposite in manners, customs, and character to the antient citizens; and that the equality which he had established between both these parties should be for ever preserved, he forbid them to alienate to each other, under any pretext whatsoever, the lands which they already possessed, or those which he might assign to them. This policy had the effect which SHAH ABAS expected. Jealousy soon gave birth to two opposite factions, who not content with distinguishing themselves by a particular name^l, and some external marks, would neither inter-marry nor have dealings with each other. Their hatred shewed itself in a very singular manner at the feast of HUSSEIN and HASSAN^m, for then they were allowed to come to blows, and tho' it was only with stones and sticks, yet those days of festivity seldom passed without costing the lives of a great many people. These combats were not only tolerated, but authorized by the prince, whose power they confirmed, inasmuch as the animosity which they fomented, produced a mutual jealousy between the two parties, which contained them both alike within the limits of obedience.

A policy so little founded on the good of society, could not but have some dangerous effects. The courtiers instead of using this artifice as a political engine, at length took a great share in it, and it was easy to perceive at the court of ISFAHAN, those sentiments of aversion which divided the common people: every grandee, either for the glory of protecting,

^k The beginning of the last century.

^l PELEUK and FELEUK. We may suppose them as mad as those were in 1640, who adopted the tenets of the church of ENGLAND and the church of SCOTLAND. I have already mentioned this in a general way in my 1st volume, concerning the PERSIAN religion.

^m The sons of ALI, whose death they commemorate.

testing, or for the advantage of being properly supported, was of one party or the other; and the antipathy which always prevailed betwixt the white and black eunuchs, was, in regard to them, what the spirit of faction was to the rest of the kingdom.

C H A P. V.

The intrigues of MIR-VAIS at the court of ISFAHAN. He goes a pilgrimage to MECCA: Different sects of MAHOMMEDANS. He proposes political doubts to the MOLLAHS at MECCA, which are resolved in his favour.

SUCH was the state of PERSIA, when MIR-VAIS came to court. This 1707. man had penetration sufficient to unravel these mysteries, and to make a proper use of such conjunctures as were favourable to his interest. He made it his first business to get acquainted with the party which opposed GURGHIN-KHAN. The steward of the king's household, and FATEY-ALI-KHAN^a, grand veneur^o, and afterwards prime minister, were at the head of this faction. MIR-VAIS found no difficulty to engage their favour against their common enemy: he knew that interest is generally a more prevailing motive than hatred to a foe, or even compassion for a friend, and made use of the greatest part of the money which the AFGHANS remitted him, to secure the protection of those lords. The presents which he made them on this occasion, amounted to thirty thousand tomans^p.

The province of KANDAHAR was no longer divided like the rest of the kingdom by this spirit of dissension: the revolutions it had undergone, had insensibly extinguished their animosities. As MIR-VAIS was avowedly neither a PELEUK nor FELEUK; he made a dexterous use of this

^a There was another KHAN of the same name, who is distinguished in the history of NADIR SHAH.

^p MIR-CHEKAR-BACHI. P 75,000/. It is said that this sum was paid by the AFGHANS in thirty thousand woolen sashes of the manufactures of TERMAI, a city in the territories of the GREAT MOGHOL.

1707. this particular circumstance: for each willing to believe him of their party, espoused his interest. Having taken such wise precautions, he was not afraid to demand an audience: accordingly he appeared before the divan, and justified his conduct with such address and eloquence, that the king already prejudiced by some of his ministers, thought it justice not only to acquit him, but to grant him his favour and protection.

A man of common ambition would have been satisfied with this success; but to a person of MIR-VAIS's stamp, it was not sufficient to justify himself; he aspired at the destruction of his accuser. His noble birth, supported by a splendid fortune, with an artful and insinuating turn of mind, operated so effectually on the mistaken compassion of HUSSEIN, that he had now free access to this monarch: and he availed himself of this favour, and of the credit of his cabal, to strike the first blow. He always spoke of his enemy with respect, and a seeming sincerity; but he gave his auditors time to reflect on the valour and power of that general: he artfully insinuated that the government of GEORGIA, KHERMANIA, and KANDAHAR, with which the same person was invested, rather rendered him a formidable prince, than an opulent lord. He reminded them, on this occasion, of his presumption in holding out in TEFFLIS against the PERSIAN armies; in fine, taking every occasion to raise the same suspicions against the governor, as the latter had excited against him, the king now began to imagine, that GURGHIN-KHAN had removed him, only to get rid of an inspector, who by his fidelity and credit, might baffle his projects.

But it was not a spirit of revenge only that excited MIR-VAIS to render the KHAN suspected; this dangerous AFGHAN had more extensive, and more exalted views. The king's effeminacy; the want of experience in his ministers and generals; the confusion and irregularity which necessarily followed from thence in the administration; and above all, that spirit of division which excited one party continually to oppose the projects formed by the other; by means whereof their very best concerted enterprizes were frustrated: these circumstances, at length, inspired MIR-VAIS with the hopes of rescuing his country from the PERSIAN yoke. His knowledge
7 and

and experience of the court had given him too mean an opinion of it, 1707. to be afraid of any difficulty from that quarter, in the execution of his design; but he was too well acquainted with the valour and abilities of GURGHIN-KHAN, to neglect any method by which he might remove that general. But the most important point was to secure in his interest the different tribes of KANDAHAR. Tho' his superior genius, his winning deportment, his great generosity, had united the hearts of the chiefs, as well as of the common people, in his favour; yet he did not think this was enough to determine him to put an absolute confidence in them, as if they would certainly join with him in an enterprize of this nature. In order therefore to cover his design with the specious veil of religion, he took his measures to render a revolt legal, and according to the decision of the highest earthly authority.

It has been already observed, that the PERSIANS and the AFGHANS treat each other as heretics. The two sects of the MAHOMMEDANS are distinguished by the names of SUNNI and SCHIAS: as MAHOMMED is reputed both by the PERSIANS and TURKS as the true messiah, their difference is about the successor of this false prophet, and the sense of some particular texts in the khoran^a. The sect of SUNNI comprehends the TURKS, some of the TARTARS, the subjects of the MOGHOL, with some other nations of less note, and among these the AFGHANS, who are all followers of OMAR. The sect of SCHIAS, includes the PERSIANS, and other nations of the same way of thinking, such as part of the OUSBEG TARTARS, and some princes of the INDIES, who are followers of ALI, and distinguish their sect also by the name of ADELIAH^b. The AFGHANS, in submitting to the dominion of the kings of PERSIA, had made it an article of their capitulation, that they should not be molested on account of their religion; nor were they ever distressed upon that subject. But MIR-VAIS resolved to make this difference in religion the basis of his design of taking up arms against his sovereign. With this secret view, he begged leave of the king to make a pilgrimage to MECCA, where he intended to consult the MULLAHS^c; as he was now no longer suspected, and

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this

^a See this subject in Vol. I. Chap. 51.^b ADELIAH properly signifies the sect of the just.^c MULLAH signifies a guide or director, the common name of priest.

1707. this pilgrimage removed him the further from KANDAHAR, his petition was granted without any difficulty.

He had not been long at MECCA, before he sent to MEDINA to desire the opinion of the chief doctors. The doubts he proposed to them were: "Whether it is lawful for mussulmen oppressed and cramped in the exercise of their religion by heretics, to take up arms, and free themselves from the yoke." The other was much to the same effect, *viz.* "Whether those mussulmen were not released from the oath of allegiance, which the chief men of each family had been forced to make to a sovereign, who was a heretic, when this sovereign did not observe the conventions which he had sworn to, but had made them slaves to infidels." After which, he expatiated on the sufferings of the nation from the avarice and violence of the GEORGIANS; observing, that several AFGHANS had already changed their religion, merely to free themselves from this tyrannical oppression.

The MULLAHS did not hesitate long about their answer; for according to the principles of the MAHOMMEDAN religion, the sword is one of the means enjoined to mussulmen, in general, for the propagation of their faith. They decided therefore in the affirmative, and MIR-VAIS having secretly obtained the FETFA^u, dispatched in the usual forms, returned to ISFAHAN. Thus far things succeeded to his wish, but this holy authority for rebellion could be of no service to him, till he should return to KANDAHAR. Notwithstanding the eager desire he had to execute his project, he was too good a politician to apply for leave to go home. On the contrary, he affected an indifference, which entirely preventing those suspicions, which an impatience of returning might have revived, he waited to see what time would produce; when a circumstance arose which greatly facilitated his designs.

^t GEBERS. MIR-VAIS by this name marked out the GEORGIANS. This word comes from CHEBR, which in the PERSIC signifies an idolater, but more particularly a worshipper of fire.

^u FETFA, or rather FETVA, the decision of the musti, when he is consulted upon any point of law.

C H A P. VI.

The emperor of RUSSIA sends an ambassador to the court of ISFAHAN. MIR-VAIS's arts to alarm the court on this account. Character of the ambassador. MIR-VAIS raises suspicion against GURGHIN-KHAN governor of KANDAHAR, and is sent back to his own country, under a notion of his fidelity.

THE governor of SHAMAKIE, at this time, gave intelligence to the court, that there was arrived upon the frontiers an ambassador from the emperor of RUSSIA, charged with letters from the pope, and likewise from the emperor of GERMANY, and attended with a more than ordinary retinue. Advice was brought, at the same time, that this ambassador, who was born in CAPAN a city of ARMENIA, had given out that he was descended from the antient kings of that province, and had let drop some hints, that he did not renounce the rights which his birth gave him to that sovereignty. These reports concerning the lineal descent of the ambassador, frivolous as they were, alarmed SHAH HUSSEIN and his ministers: their puerile fears thus carried their apprehensions beyond all the bounds of probability, for they concluded, that an ARMENIAN who was born a subject of PERSIA, and had presumed to talk in that manner, did not come so well attended, and under the protection of three princes of the same religion as himself, to act merely as an ambassador. The alarm was soon increased by those, who supposing that some parts of the reports were true, thought it their interest to magnify the whole. A FRENCHMAN, who had been sent to the court of ISFAHAN by LEWIS XIV, for the affairs of commerce; and some other EUROPEANS who were settled in that city, gave into this ridiculous story. They had been informed, that this ambassador threatened to cause all the missionaries to be expelled the kingdom, and therefore endeavoured to shew that the letters of recommendation from the christian princes, by virtue of which he had met with a favourable reception, were supposititious pieces; using their interest at the same time to dissuade the court from receiving the

1708. the ambassador: alledging certain predictions preserved in the archives of the ARMENIANS, which foretold that the kingdom of ARMENIA should be re-established one day under the protection of RUSSIA. And in order to impose on a people naturally credulous with regard to future events, they corroborated these predictions with a FRENCH anagram taken from the ambassador's name, observing that in ISRAEL ORII^w, were found the letters IL SERA ROI, that is, "he shall be king."

The artful insinuations of MIR-VAIS made a strong impression on the minds of the courtiers. With those of the same faction as GURGHIN-KHAN, he laid no great stress upon these circumstances; but with those of the opposite party, "the state," he said, "was in the most perillous situation: for there was no reason to doubt, but the CZAR, whose power and ambition were well known to all the world, had undertaken to rescue from the PERSIAN yoke, a nation who professed the same religion as himself. That the ambassador must be a secret emissary, who under the sanction of his character, was come to blow the coals of sedition even in the heart of the kingdom. Otherwise, why should an ARMENIAN have been chosen? Could those princes have been at a loss to find in their vast dominions, subjects of their own, who were properly qualified for such a function? And why should this minister pretend to be descended from the antient kings of ARMENIA, if it was not to obtain more credit with the credulous part of his country? But this was the smallest part of the danger. If the government had nothing to apprehend but the attempts of the MUSCOVITES and ARMENIANS, the brave inhabitants of GEORGIA, who are situate between them, would be an insurmountable barrier against the one; and as for the others, it is well known that they are more disposed to commerce than war; and consequently will not attempt to shake off their subjection to our invincible sovereign. But who can undertake to answer for the fidelity of those very GEORGIANS? Is there the least reason to doubt, but they submit with reluctance to a people of a different religion? Have we forgot the efforts they made some years ago, to withdraw themselves from their subjection, at the instigation of GURGHIN-KHAN,

^w The name of the ambassador.

“ KHAN, who now is governor of three of the finest provinces of the 1708.
 “ kingdom? In fine, are we ignorant, that SANAZARLI-KHAN, this prince’s
 “ cousin-german, is now at the court of ST. PETERSBURG, from whence
 “ perhaps he corresponds with him, while he continually sollicit the CZAR,
 “ to free those unbelievers from their subjection to our empire^x. The
 “ RUSSIAN armies, reinforced by the troops of one of those infidel na-
 “ tions, and paid by the other, may at any time without fighting march
 “ over the high mountains of ALBURTZ^y, cross the KURA^z, and pitch
 “ their tents on the banks of the ARAS^a. And when these formidable
 “ enemies shall have penetrated into the heart of the kingdom, are we
 “ to presume that GURGHIN-KHAN, who has already attempted to ascend
 “ the throne of his ancestors, will sacrifice his ambition and interest to
 “ his duty? Or is it to be imagined, that this prince, who is descended
 “ from the sovereigns of GEORGIA, and a christian in his heart, will em-
 “ ploy the forces quartered in KANDAHAR and KHERMANIA, which he
 “ can bring together at a single word, against his country, his religion,
 “ and the subjects of his ancestors?”

These arguments were very specious and solid, to men who endeavoured to be frightened. In fact, every thing contributed to increase the general alarm; while MIR-VAIS was the only person at court, who saw into the falsity of these political visions. This man had too much sense and penetration, not to perceive immediately, that these chimerical ideas had no foundation; having been occasioned only by some indiscreet speeches of the embassador, which shewed rather his folly and stupidity, than his having any design of this nature. For how prodigiously absurd was it to believe, that the emperor PETER the GREAT, should without any necessity deliver up the pretender into the king’s hands, and that this minister, who had such a personal interest not to be discovered, should begin
by

^x This was a plausible motive of fear. MILITETZKI, prince of GEORGIA, had been in RUSSIA, and his only son was general of the artillery to PETER the GREAT. These princes were now dead; but as it was believed that the CZAR had promised MILITETZKI to re-instate him in his principality, as soon as the war with SWEDEN was ended: it was also imagined that this monarch still persisted (in 1715) in his resolution of dispossessing the usurper. ^y Mount CAUCASUS. ^z Formerly called CYRUS. ^a Formerly ARAXES.

1708. by a voluntary indiscretion, the execution of his design, the whole success of which depended on secrecy and circumspection?

Nothing, indeed, could be worse founded than this panic. The pretended successor of the kings of ARMENIA, was an adventurer, who after having successively sold coffee, and served as a common soldier, became a subaltern in the service of the emperor LEOPOLD; but as he understood the ORIENTAL languages, he was, at length, chosen by the court of VIENNA, to sound the disposition of the TURKS, in regard to the peace which was afterwards concluded at KARLOWITZ. Upon his return from CONSTANTINOPLE, he passed into the service of PETER the GREAT, who in consideration of the same abilities, made him a colonel, and employed him also to negotiate a peace with the OTTOMAN port; to prevent his being interrupted by that power, during the war which he intended to declare against the king of SWEDEN.

ISRAEL ORII having discharged this important commission to the CZAR's satisfaction, desired as a reward for his services, that his majesty would gratify him with an embassy to ISFAHAN. He considered that this would be the surest way to enrich himself in a little time: ministers of this character enjoying great privileges in PERSIA, particularly that of not paying any customs. As soon as he had obtained his credentials, he took post to VIENNA, and thence to ROME, where he pretended to be capable of bringing the schismatic ARMENIANS into the pale of the ROMISH church, and having already obtained letters from the emperor, he procured also a brief from CLEMENT XI, for SHAH HUSSEIN.

These were the particulars of an event, which gave rise to so many idle speculations. The numerous retinue which attended the ambassador, consisted for the most part of ARMENIANS, who were proprietors of the goods he brought with him; except some RUSSIANS, who were going to BAKU, and had accompanied him to SHAMAKIE, in order to give the more lustre to his embassy. So that the pretensions of sovereignty, and the design of turning the missionaries out of the kingdom, were idle words which this minister let drop on purpose, to engage his companions to join with him in the expences of the journey into PERSIA. SHAH

HUSSEIN

HUSSEIN being ignorant of these circumstances, was for some time dubious how to act: but the fear of giving PETER the GREAT any pretence for a rupture, prevailing over every other consideration, he came to a resolution, contrary to the general expectation of the EUROPEANS, to receive the ambassador. ISRAEL ORII therefore set out from SHAMAKIE; and from the prejudice already conceived in his favour, the PERSIANS paid a yet greater regard to him, than is generally shewn to persons of his character; so that he had reason to be satisfied with the honours and distinctions which he received during his stay at ISFAHAN.

In the mean time, the artful speeches of MIR-VAIS had produced the effect which he expected. The court, continually terrified with chimeras, the natural consequence of a distemper'd government, began to take umbrage at the excessive power of GURGHIN-KHAN; and the enemies of that prince, at the head of whom was the prime minister^b, taking advantage of these dispositions, found no difficulty in persuading the timorous SHAH HUSSEIN to join with them in suspicions, which were authorized by the remembrance of what had passed some years before at TEFLIS. It is probable, that GURGHIN-KHAN would have been recalled, but that they doubted, whether he would not undertake to maintain himself there by force; or, after the example of ALI-MERDAN-KHAN, he might not betray the country to the MOGHOL: they resolved therefore to pursue a less dangerous method; this was, to place near his person one whom they could confide in, who was capable of watching over his conduct, and at the same time able to make head against him, if he offered to create any disturbance. They were not long deliberating upon the choice: this commission was given to MIR-VAIS; and as it was of some consequence, on this occasion, to increase his credit with the people, he was honoured with the KHALAET^c, and reinstated in his employment.

Thus

^b ATHEMAT DOULET. In PERSIC, IKHTIMADOULET signifies supporter of the power. This post is different from that of the vizir-azem, or grand vizirs in TURKEY, inasmuch as the latter being generalissimo's of the armies, their dignity answers to that of lieutenant-general of the empire.

^c KHALAET signifies perfect or accomplished: a robe of honour which is given by the king's orders; it is also used for arms, horses, or the like present from a superior. The TURKS call this CARTAN, and the RUSSIANS have the same word for a common coat.

1708. Thus Providence ordained, that a fearful apprehension, arising from the idle talk of an adventurer, should bring about the invasion of one of the most flourishing monarchies of the eastern world. MIR-VAIS, who from the very circumstances of this ridiculous terror, had made a discovery of the weakness of the PERSIAN government; was no sooner returned to KANDAHAR, than he applied his thoughts how to prevail on his countrymen, to embark with him in the enterprize he had meditated. He was wavering in regard to the manner in which he should acquaint them with his project, when a favourable opportunity offered of commencing the execution of it. This was owing to an event, which to those who are unacquainted with the difference of manners and laws between the EUROPEANS and ORIENTAL nations, may appear as a romance, though there is good reason to believe it true.

CHAP. VII.

GURGHIN-KHAN demands the daughter of MIR-VAIS. The AFGHANS assemble and determine to revolt. MIR-VAIS by an artifice imposes upon GURGHIN-KHAN, and gains his confidence. A conspiracy concerted with the tribe of TIRINS. MIR-VAIS massacres the KHAN with all his retinue, and takes possession of KANDAHAR.

GURGHIN-KHAN made no doubt, but his conduct to the AFGHANS had been censured at court; but he still continued to act towards them with his usual severity. Being now provoked at the return and justification of one of their chiefs, whom he had pronounced guilty, he determined to let these people know, that neither the favour nor honours which the king had granted to MIR-VAIS, should screen him from his resentment, who knew him so much better than he was known at the PERSIAN court. With this view, he resolved by some signal act to humble them all at one and the same time; and hurried by the impetuosity of his temper, he chose the most dangerous method he could have thought of; judging it the best adapted to his purpose, of making them feel the full extent of his power.

MIR-VAIS

MIR-VAIS had a daughter, who was esteemed the most beautiful lady 1708. in the province. The KHAN now demanded her for his harram, and explained himself in such terms, as shewed he was determined to be obeyed. This act of tyranny was more than MIR-VAIS expected, but his mind being already full of his favourite design, he made a proper use of this incident, to sound the disposition of the AFGHANS, in regard to the plot he was contriving. He acquainted the principal men among them, with his present case, by whom it was soon communicated to others. Those people have an utter aversion against marrying their daughters to strangers: but to give away as a slave, the child of one of the most powerful of their chiefs, and of a person who was a prince by his birth, to a man of a different sect, was to them the greatest mark of ignominy and reproach. There was no time to lose: the KHAN pressed the execution of his orders, and they were reduced to the alternative of either complying with his will, or resolving to oppose it; they accordingly determined upon the latter. Some of the warmest and most zealous of the tribe assembled secretly in MIR-VAIS's tent, and one of them is recorded to have made a speech to this effect:

“ O MIR-VAIS! thy country-men thus cry to thee with one common
“ voice: judge from THY OWN situation, to what a miserable state we are
“ reduced. We no longer reckon among our misfortunes, the tyrannical
“ taxes with which we are loaded; no longer do we weep to see our-
“ selves stript of our paternal inheritances, by a power that does not even
“ seek to palliate its iniquities under the veil of laws. These calamities,
“ which would create the most sensible affliction to other nations, affect
“ us no longer. The loss of property is supportable, because it may be
“ repaired; but there is no repairing the loss of honour. Recollect the
“ odious contempt with which we are treated, by people who are in-
“ debted to our pusillanimity for the authority with which they lord it
“ over us. Does not this vile treatment, which will render us the dis-
“ grace of mankind, excite thy courage? Shall we remind thee of those
“ acts of violence, the very thought of which covers us with infamy?
“ Neither innocence, nor the sacred matrimonial bands, are longer any
“ barriers

1708. “ barriers against the unbridled licentiousness of our barbarous masters.
 “ Thou knowest it well: thou, O MIR-VAIS! whose birth and valour
 “ have raised thee so far above the common level; hast not thou suffered
 “ such treatment, as none but slaves can think of without indignation?
 “ What fatality holds thy arm? Dost thou wait for fresh insults, fresh
 “ outrages? Dost thou wait till the tyrant makes thee stoop, a second
 “ time, under the ignominious weight of chains^d? Or wilt thou invoke
 “ his guards to fill up the measure of our shame, by ravishing from the
 “ arms of thy wife, the young princess whom he demands of thee; not
 “ to indulge his amorous desires with her, but to glut his hatred of thee.
 “ If valour does not support us to oppose this tyranny, despair will direct
 “ our blows like thunder-bolts from heaven. Let us retire into the moun-
 “ tains; and if we must perish, let us at least wipe off the stain of infamy.”

MIR-VAIS listened without any seeming emotion, and the whole assembly having fixed their eyes on him, waited with impatience to hear what reply he would make; when, raising his voice, he spoke to this effect:
 “ I thank the Supreme, for the generous sentiments with which he has
 “ inspired your breasts. The interest of the nation calls on us aloud to
 “ be of one common opinion; but there are many ways to attain the
 “ same end: let our greatest dependance be on our courage and sagacity.
 “ The serpent that lies awake, will overcome the lion when he falls
 “ asleep: let us conceal our swords in beds of roses; and if you think
 “ highly enough of me, to leave the revenge of your cause to my care,
 “ this glorious design must be kept an inviolable secret.”

The AFGHANS answered with a general applause, and all promised the most submissive obedience, and the strictest secrecy. “ They swore to
 “ suffer their wives to be torn from them, and their slaves to be set at
 “ liberty, if they did not perform their engagements; and this they also
 “ confirmed upon bread, salt, their sabres, and the khoran^e.”

We all know, that it is the custom of the east, for women of condition, or even those who are slaves to persons of any rank, never to stir from

^d He is said to have been sent to ISFAHAN in irons.
 as it may be presumed to include their temporal as well as eternal life.

^e A custom which is very significative,

from a certain inclosure^f, which none but the master is permitted to enter. Young women remain there, till they are married, and consequently are never seen by strangers. MIR-VAIS now made his use of this circumstance: as soon as the assembly broke up, he sent for a girl who was young and handsome, and instructing her in the part she was to act, he ordered her to be magnificently dressed, and conducted to GURGHIN-KHAN, as his daughter. After giving this deceitful testimony of his obedience to the governor, he made it his business to court the acquaintance of his favourites, and even of his domestics, whom he gained by bribes and fair promises, insomuch that they all agreed to use their endeavours to reconcile their master to him.

GURGHIN-KHAN knew very well that MIR-VAIS had justified himself before the divan, and that the king had honoured him with the KHALAET: these circumstances, which at first excited his anger, now prejudiced him in his favour; apprehending that he had no design to create any occasion of fresh alarms. The solicitations of his creatures and domestics so far softened his resentment, that MIR-VAIS had leave to appear in his presence. This artful AFGHAN was now to give a master-proof of his dangerous abilities. He pretended so much respect and submission at this interview, that the KHAN flattered himself with having absolutely humbled the most powerful of his enemies.

MIR-VAIS did not stop there: for not satisfied with being thus reconciled in appearance to a man whose destruction he had vowed, he used all his endeavours to gain his confidence and friendship. He was oftener seen at the governor's levee, than in his own habitation: he no longer importuned him with representations of the grievances of the nation: he seemed to have forgotten all past injuries, and to employ his time intirely in courting his favour. Such a behaviour, joined to the great authority he had among his country-men, with an easy address, won the heart of GURGHIN-KHAN, so that he reckoned him among the number of his intimate friends.

As soon as MIR-VAIS saw his business brought thus far, he thought it a proper time to put the finishing stroke to his work. We have already mentioned,

^f The harram.

1708. mentioned, that excepting the garrison of KANDAHAR, there were no other troops in the province but GEORGIANS, whom the KHAN had kept near his person. And tho' these did not amount to one thousand men, yet as they were the best troops in the east, they were an invincible obstacle to an open execution of MIR-VAIS's design: but this wary AFGHAN being fertile in stratagems, secretly engaged the chiefs of one of the tribes, named TIRIN, to refuse to pay the usual taxes; the KHAN was no sooner informed of this rebellion, than he ordered the greatest part of the GEORGIANS, in whom consisted his principal security, to march that way in order to suppress it.

1709. In the interim, MIR-VAIS had directed his tribe to approach within two or three leagues of KANDAHAR: and as soon as he heard that GURGHIN-KHAN had ordered troops to march against the TIRINS, he expressed the highest resentment of the mutiny of those people; so far was he from excusing them, that he enlarged upon the punishment which they deserved. This artful behaviour so totally defeated the wariness of the governor, that he made no difficulty to accept of an entertainment, to which MIR-VAIS had invited him, under a pretence of reconciling to his favour two leading men of his nation, who had not as yet appeared in his presence. On the day appointed for the feast, MIR-VAIS had every thing ready for the execution of his design. It was customary to admit every day into the town a certain number of AFGHANS, who were employed by the garrison and townsmen in laborious offices: that day he caused as many armed men, as might pass unobserved, to enter the town along with these labourers, and gave them orders, by all means to elude the prohibition which strangers were under, of staying in town after sun-set, which was the time of shutting the gates. He left nothing untried that was capable of confirming the resolution of the conspirators; and having taken every other measure that his prudence suggested to him, he waited, not with the anxious fears that attend plots, but with sanguine hopes, to see the speedy issue of his undertaking.

The governor set out from KANDAHAR in the morning, and arrived at the camp, which was designedly pitched near one of his country houses.

There he was received with the greatest demonstrations of joy and respect. 1709. Soon after a sumptuous repast was served up: the plenty of wine, together with the heat of the day, having overcome the governor, he fell asleep in the tent where the entertainment was given; while the officers and domestics of his retinue, took their rest in the tents of the AFGHANS, who had invited them thither, to partake of the feast. No sooner were these unsuspecting guests asleep, than MIR-VAIS at the head of fifty men armed with spears, rushed into the tent where the governor was asleep. This had been appointed as a signal to the other conspirators, who immediately entered the tents where the governor's retinue were sleeping, and instantly massacred every PERSIAN and GEORGIAN they could find. Their unhappy chief underwent the same fate; but it is said of him, that having had time to draw his sabre, he slew several of his assassins before he fell.

When this treacherous slaughter was over, MIR-VAIS ordered the dead bodies to be stript, and their arms, cloaths, and horses to be distributed among the bravest of his tribe; and taking to himself the cloaths, horse and arms of GURGHIN-KHAN, he marched towards KANDAHAR, in the same order as had been generally observed by the governor. It was about an hour after sun-set, when the conspirators arrived at the gates of the city. The guard, deceived by these false appearances, granted them admittance, and were cut in pieces before they were sensible of their error. The flower of the AFGHANS, that followed at a small distance, arrived soon after; and dividing themselves into different bodies, were soon joined by their country-men, who had been admitted that morning into the town; part of them marched towards the several posts, and part advancing towards the head quarters, they surprized the garrison, already weakened by the large detachment of the GEORGIANS, and made them an easy prey. MIR-VAIS with his usual presence of mind, now caused a proclamation to be made, that the townsmen should keep within doors, where they would be intirely safe. By this piece of policy, the garrison being deprived even of this precarious assistance, every soldier and person attached to the KHAN, were in a very few hours cut in pieces.

C H A P. VIII.

MIR-VAIS engages the inhabitants of KANDAHAR to join with him in the rebellion. Famous retreat of the GEORGIANS. MIR-VAIS makes himself master of the streight of ZEBIL. The PERSIAN court orders troops to be levied, and sends deputies to KANDAHAR.

1709. **T**HE day after the taking of KANDAHAR, MIR-VAIS yet depending more on cunning than strength, caused the principal inhabitants to be summoned early in the morning; and after having quieted their fears by his soft and obliging behaviour, he protested to them, that ambition had no share in his undertaking; that his only aim was to free his country from the yoke under which it had so long groaned: he then expatiated upon what the AFGHANS in general, and himself in particular had suffered for some years; and very artfully treating the interests of the assembly as his own, he thus continued: “ You may judge from my
 “ sentiments, and every circumstance of my conduct, that my design is
 “ not to oppress, but to free you from slavery. The AFGHANS will al-
 “ ways esteem you as the companions of their past servitude, and present
 “ felicity. Do not be afraid that the happiness we are now going to en-
 “ joy, will ever be interrupted. The tyrant GURGHIN-KHAN is no more;
 “ he was the only person among the PERSIANS that deserved the name
 “ of a soldier: can you imagine they will ever dare to undertake what
 “ the emperors of INDIA have attempted in vain, with more troops than
 “ there are stones in our walls? ’Tis only by motion that water is puri-
 “ fied; an enemy immerfed in luxury is far from being formidable. If
 “ there are any amongst you that have not the courage to enjoy this
 “ precious gift of liberty, which is dropt down to you from heaven,
 “ let him declare himself: no harm shall be done to him; he shall be
 “ permitted to go in search of some new tyrant beyond the frontier of
 “ this happy state.” The inhabitants not expecting such mild propo-
 sitions, answered with loud praises and acclamations. They all concurred
 in offering to expose their lives and fortunes in support of the com-
 mon

mon cause; they swore eternal fidelity to him, and begged him to continue his labours to terminate an enterprize, on the success of which the public felicity depended. 1709.

MIR-VAIS now convened the chief men of his tribe: he made them sensible, that in such conjunctures, unanimity is essential to safety, representing to them what they had to hope or fear, from the good or bad understanding in which they might live with the inhabitants; and after joining authority to persuasion, he forbade them to give the least offence or molestation to the people. In order to secure his conquest, he took every step that prudence dictated; whilst necessity supplied the place of experience. The arms which he found in the town, he distributed among the bravest and best affectioned of his men; he gave orders for filling the magazines; for repairing the fortifications; and putting the artillery in order. Workmen were employed night and day, in making gun-powder and fire-arms: he sent messengers to the different heads of the tribes, informing them of his success, and inviting them to come and join him with all expedition.

Three days had elapsed since the governor's death, when the centinels descried from the ramparts a considerable body of cavalry; this was the detachment of GEORGIANS, who, ignorant of what had passed^e, were coming to the city, loaded with the spoils of the rebels. As their return was expected, proper orders were given for their reception; they were suffered to advance within musket-shot, when the cannon of the town was discharged at them; so that they immediately conjectured that the place had changed masters. MIR-VAIS thought this a good opportunity for establishing the reputation of his arms; he accordingly marched out at the head of five or six thousand horse, intending to cut off the retreat of the GEORGIANS; but he soon perceived, that he had to do with troops better disciplined, and more inured to war, than his AFGHANS. The

^e All the PERSIANS and GEORGIANS in the town having been massacred, and the PATENS or AFGHANS of the open country favouring the enterprize. Tho' this may appear improbable to an EUROPEAN, yet it is easy to be reconciled in a country but thinly inhabited.

1709. The GEORGIANS quitting their booty, forced their way sword in hand, and passed the defile of ZEBIL. After fighting their way thro' the country for the space of eight days, with an amazing intrepidity, they marched out of the province. What the GEORGIANS suffered in this retreat, as well through want of provisions and forage, as the frequent attacks of their enemies, is hardly credible; but their courage was invincible. The AFGHANS made five different attacks upon them in one day, and notwithstanding the great superiority of their numbers, they were always repulsed; infomuch that they lost above two thousand men in these different engagements. As an instance of the resolution of the GEORGIANS, it is related, that they swam their horses over a considerable river, within three leagues of the defile of ZEBIL, on the side of KANDAHAR: one of them, who was dismounted, seeing an AFGHAN riding towards him in full speed, turned back to meet him, and holding out to him, with one hand, his sabre, as if he intended to surrender, with the other, he shot him thro' the head, with a pistol; then leaping upon the dead man's horse, he plunged into the river, which he crossed under the incessant fire of the enemy, who were amazed at his resolution. All the advantage that MIR-VAIS reaped from this expedition, was the making himself master of the defile of ZEBIL. This streight is on the side of PERSIA, as that of CABUL is towards INDIA, and these are the only passes thro' the mountains with which the province of KANDAHAR is surrounded. The AFGHAN chief, who had now so lately experienced, that valour alone is not sufficient in carrying on a war, left troops to guard these narrow passes, and applied himself to discipline his men, and also to gain the other towns of the province; in hopes, that by their means, together with the alliances which he intended to conclude with his neighbours, he should be able to withstand the forces that might be sent against him.

In the mean time the GEORGIANS marching back into PERSIA, spread the news of this revolt, which soon reached ISFAHAN. The PERSIAN court being sensible of their own weakness, and of the difficulty of penetrating thro' the mountains with an army, had likewise reason to apprehend, lest if they should gain any advantage by force of arms over the

AFGHANS, these people might be tempted a second time to surrender the country to the MOGHOL. In this critical conjuncture, new levies of troops were ordered; but before they proceeded to open force, they thought proper to try the ways of negotiation.

MAHOMMED GEANI KHAN was the person chosen for this deputation; accordingly he set out for KANDAHAR, where he used every art that the love of his country suggested to him, to prevail upon the rebel-chief to return to his duty; and having a particular intimacy with MIR-VAIS, he addressed him in this manner: “ My friendship for thee would not permit me to see the storm gathering over thy head, without endeavouring to avert it. I have prostrated myself with tears in my eyes, and bitter grief in my soul, at the threshold of the palace of their sublime majesties^h, who, reluctant to punish, have let fall the arm that was lifted up against thee in their wrath; they have given me leave to come and speak to thee; and I am commissioned by them to tell thee, that tho’ they are justly offended at the death of the KHAN; yet they forgive this crime, as thou only hast anticipated a punishment which their justice was preparing for him: they consider what is since past only as a necessary consequence of that action: thus the storm is blown over; do not therefore excite new troubles, but restore KANDAHAR to its true defenders; and by this mark of submission, merit the favours with which the crown is ready to distinguish thee.”

MAHOMMED GEANI KHAN continuing his speech, added menaces to promises, when MIR-VAIS, who was afraid lest this discourse should make some impression on the minds of the hearers, silenced him abruptly to this effect: “ Deceitful man, what do all these artful subterfuges avail? Dost thou imagine that wisdom dwells only in the bosom of effeminacy, and hath never passed the mountains with which these states are surrounded? Know then, that all those who have here listened to thee, are as sensible, as myself, of the snares in which thou art endeavouring to entangle us. Let thy king either raise or let fall his arm, as he pleases; they are slaves, and not mussulmen, who are afraid of the blow. If

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“ he

^h For his majesty; the ORIENTAL way of expressing themselves as a mark of greater respect to their prince. It may be observed, that the PERSIANS use the third person plural even to private persons in common discourse.

1709. " he were as formidable, as thou wouldst make us believe, it is with
 " deeds, and not with empty words, he would oppose our just designs."

Having thus spoke, MIR-VAIS ordered the deputy to be sent to prison: whether he thought by this means to prevent the court from receiving intelligence, and to gain time for making greater preparations; or intended by this act of violence, to cut off all hopes of reconciliation with the PERSIANS; certain it is, that the detention of MAHOMMED GEANI KHAN, and the exactness with which all the passes were guarded, hindered the court from being informed of what had passed. The ministers being uneasy at not hearing the success of this deputation, resolved at length to venture upon a second. As the lieutenant of MAHOMMED KHAN, governor of HERAT, had performed the pilgrimage to MECCA in company with MIR-VAIS, and had contracted a strict friendship with him; they were induced to imagine that such a person would be less suspected, and more agreeable to him, than any other. The new deputy arrived, and explained the subject of his commission: but MIR-VAIS told him in an angry tone, " Thou mayst thank thy good fortune in being my fellow-
 " traveller; and the laws of hospitality, by which thou art intitled in my
 " house to bread and salt: were it not for these circumstances, thou
 " shouldst be no longer in a condition to make such base proposals to
 " men who are free. Slave to a king who is going to lose his royalty,
 " listen to what I declare to thee this day. THE VICTORY COMES FROM
 " GOD, AND THIS VICTORY IS NEAR¹. The impure worship of the
 " followers of ALI, has too long infected the most fertile provinces of
 " ASIA. Heaven has at length declared against the PERSIANS: the AF-
 " GHANS, who are charged with the divine vengeance, will not sheath
 " their swords, till they have destroyed this prince and extirpated his
 " nation." After this menacing speech, which seemed in some degree prophetic, MIR-VAIS contented himself with detaining the deputy, but did not chuse to violate, in the person of his old acquaintance and friend, those laws which he had so little respected in that of the deputy of his sovereign.

¹ A passage of the khoran.

C H A P. IX.

The PERSIAN court raises troops, and sends deputies to KANDAHAR. Defeat of the KHANS of HERAT and TAVRIS. KHOSROFF KHAN is sent against the AFGHANS: obtains a victory over them, and lays siege to KANDAHAR. His defeat and death. Another PERSIAN army defeated. The province of KANDAHAR entirely subjected by MIR-VAIS, who dies in 1715.

THE court at length perceiving that there were no hopes of recovering KANDAHAR by negotiation, gave orders to the KHAN of HERAT to march against the rebels, at the head of 15000 horse. MIR-VAIS who was well acquainted with the difference between the PERSIANS and GEORGIANS, went to meet him with only 5000 horse, which he had assembled in a hurry, upon the news of the enemy's approach. The AFGHANS having fired some field pieces, the PERSIANS were struck with a panic, and did not wait for the first onset, but flying before their enemies, gave themselves up to slaughter; and after a grievous carnage, the AFGHANS returned to their camp, enriched with spoils. This action, which was followed by two or three others of the like nature, in the space of 18 months, gave the rebels such a contempt for their enemy, that they attacked them upon every occasion, without regarding their numbers. Of this there was a melancholy instance in MAHOMMED KHAN governor of TAVRIS. This general by the king's orders, having marched in SEPTEMBER this year, against the rebels, at the head of 5000 horse, met with such a warm reception from their van-guard, consisting only of 500 AFGHAN cavalry, that he had above 1000 men killed and wounded, and was taken prisoner himself with three of his sons.

The bad success of these expeditions, induced the court to make preparations for the continuation of the war with more order and precaution. They had raised a considerable army, and had given the command of it to KHOSROFF KHAN^k a GEORGIAN, which was a very natural piece of policy.

^kThis word is generally translated lord or governor; but KAI in the ancient PERSIC signifies a giant, and metaphorically a king, or great captain.

1711. policy. This prince, entrusted with the care of revenging the cause of his own country-men, as well as that of his sovereign, marched into KHORASAN, and from thence advancing eastward, in the month of NOVEMBER, he pitched his tents in the neighbourhood of FARRA¹; a city not far distant from the enemy's country. Valour without prudence does not merit the name of virtue in a general. KHOSROFF KHAN therefore resolved to wait in this neighbourhood, in order to be informed of the progress and forces of the rebels. Accordingly he made inquiries into the state of their troops, the nature of the country, and of their strong holds; and sacrificing his private resentments to the public good, he agreed to a suspension of arms, and entered into a negotiation, to try if any method could be found to prevent the effusion of blood. The king's army, consisting of 30,000 PERSIANS and 1200 GEORGIANS, advanced in good order towards the strait of ZEBIL; from whence part of these GEORGIANS had made the famous retreat already mentioned. The number of the AFGHAN army was inferior to that of their enemy. All these troops, according to the custom of that part of the east, were composed of cavalry. MIR-VAIS did not judge proper to make his men dismount, and being sensible how difficult it would be for cavalry to act in these defiles, he resolved to quit his post, and retire to the river BELESE, about three leagues distant, and there dispute the passage.

The PERSIANS greatly surprized to find the passes unguarded, at length discovered the enemy, who bordered the opposite banks of the river. KHOSROFF KHAN was the first who plunged in, the rest immediately followed the example of their general, and swam their horses over; the AFGHANS astonished at their resolution, and being charged with equal intrepidity, gave way, and retired in disorder. The GEORGIAN prince made a proper use of his victory: for his troops were scarce returned from pursuing the enemy, than he ordered them to march forthwith to invest KANDAHAR. The AFGHANS having had no time to recover their courage, nor accustomed to a regular manner of waging war, were amazed at this first disgrace: what added to their confusion was the absence of

MIR-VAIS,

¹ A square town, about half a league in circumference, surrounded with a mud-wall. It stands in a fertile country, abundantly supplied with water.

MIR-VAIS, who not confiding in them sufficiently to lock himself up in 1711. the town, kept the field with the shattered remains of his army. Things being thus situated, they sent deputies to KHOSROFF KHAN, with proposals to deliver up the place, on condition that he would preserve their lives, their liberty, and fortunes.

This general had it now in his power with a single word to terminate this destructive war; but his prudence forsook him. Transported by his resentment, and elated with his success, he thought it beneath his dignity to grant a capitulation to rebels, whom he had so lately vanquished. He therefore gave them to understand, that they must submit at discretion. Death appearing more eligible than slavery; the AFGHANS would not listen to so dangerous a proposal, and the KHAN began to attack the town.

In the mean time the impressions of fear were in a great measure worn out, and the number of MIR-VAIS's troops greatly augmented. There is a large country south of KANDAHAR, which modern geographers distinguish by the name of MACKERAN; it is bounded by KERMAN on the west; a chain of mountains separates it towards the east from the MOGHOL's empire, and the rest of it is inclosed by the INDIAN ocean. The BALOUCHES, a fierce and warlike people, descended, as already mentioned, from the AFGHANS, are dispersed throughout these deserts, which are reckoned a province of PERSIA. MIR-VAIS had sent a deputation to these people, and found no difficulty in persuading them to engage in a confederacy, on the success of which their common liberty depended. At the same time, the TIRINS^m enrolled themselves in great numbers under MIR-VAIS's banners, who was now grown wiser by his mistakes, and resolved not to expose himself again to the hazard of an unequal combat. Cunning and stratagem which had been so often serviceable to him, were now his last resource; and he determined to deprive them of forage and provisions, so as to ruin the PERSIAN army, or at least oblige them to retreat. With this intent, he ordered his troops to lay waste the country about KANDAHAR: his commands were so well executed, that the besiegers soon began to feel the inconveniency of want. KHOSROFF KHAN being now vexed to the heart for having refused to sign the capitulation,

was

^m One of the tribes of the CLIGIS already mentioned.

1711. was obstinately bent upon taking the town, and daily renewed his attacks; but the garrison defended themselves with such bravery, that the PERSIANS tired out with such a long resistance, and labouring under a want of all necessaries, soon deserted in whole troops. The KHAN seeing his army at length reduced to 10,000 men, and not knowing any longer how to find subsistence even for these, resolved to retire. This resolution however was too late; for he had scarce begun to raise the siege, when MIRVAIS, who was marching with 16,000 horse to the relief of the place, fell upon his troops, who were so disheartened that they fled at the first onset. Their general strove to rally them, but fear had stifled every sense of subordination; inasmuch that finding his efforts vain, and resolving not to survive the disgrace, he rushed at the head of the few remaining GEORGIANS, into the midst of the thickest squadrons of the AFGHANS, where fighting with a desperate bravery, he was killed.

Such was the end of this prince, whom valour, military experience, and other virtues, rendered worthy of a better fate. He had been successively honoured with the posts of governor of ISFAHAN, and of DIVAN-BEGHI^a, and by the death of his father was just raised to the dignity of VALI of GEORGIA, when the king named him generalissimo of his armies. He, as well as GURGHIN KHAN his uncle, had the weakness to sacrifice his religion to his ambition; yet in his heart he was still a christian; and the missionaries were always sure to receive protection and assistance from him; he had even in that expedition two of those religious people with him, one of whom was killed close by him. It seems as if he intended to return to the religion of his ancestors, yet he affected outwardly to pass for a MAHOMMEDAN; from whence we may suspect the report of his carrying a cross in his standard.

This was the most considerable shock which the PERSIANS had yet sustained in their war with the AFGHANS; for of their whole army, only 700 men escaped death or slavery: such was their distress for want of provisions and forage, during their retreat for several days, through rivers and defiles, whilst they were continually pursued by a numerous body of fresh cavalry.

The

^a DIVAN-BEGHI, or lord of the council. He is lord chief-justice.

The PERSIAN court was greatly astonished at so important a loss, yet necessity seemed to dictate fresh efforts. Accordingly another army was raised, and the command given to MAHOMMED RUSTAN KHAN, who marched against the rebels: but whatever valour and abilities that general might have, fortune did not favour him more than his predecessor. His troops were beaten and put to flight; and after this engagement, all the towns and strong holds, which had yet held out against the new government, submitted to them, and the whole kingdom of KANDAHAR acknowledged no other laws than those of the AFGHANS. 1713.

The GEORGIANS, incensed at so many defeats, which they justly imputed to the cowardice and inexperience of the PERSIAN troops; made an offer to the king of subduing the rebels, on condition that their army should be composed only of troops of their own nation; and that the necessary sums for defraying the charges of this expedition, should be paid at a certain time: but this weak prince HUSSEIN, afraid of their making a bad use of their success, it is said, rejected their proposal. Be that as it may, the defeat of MAHOMMED RUSTAN KHAN, was the last remarkable transaction during the reign of MIR-VAIS. The court having lost all hopes of reducing him by open force, ceased to arm against him; so that this prince died peaceably in his new kingdom in 1714.

It may be said of this famous rebel, that he was as circumspect in engaging in any enterprize, as he was resolute in carrying it into execution; that his success was owing as much to his prudence as to his valour; and if he did not subvert the throne of his lawful sovereign, yet he gave the first blow to the PERSIAN monarchy, and formed the people, by whom it was afterwards subverted. He had for some time assumed the title of king, and ordered that the KHOTBAH^o, should be made in his name, and arrogated to himself the other ensigns of sovereignty. The inscription round his coin was a PERSIAN distich, the sense of which is, “The celebrated MIR-VAIS, emperor of the world, a most just prince, has caused this coin to be struck at KANDAHAR, the place of his residence.” 1715.

^o A prayer read by the IMAN or priest of every mosque, every FRIDAY in the afternoon, for the health of the king; and this is an essential mark of the acknowledgment of his sovereignty.

P A R T III.

T H E

R E V O L U T I O N S O F P E R S I A,

F R O M T H E

D E A T H O F M I R - V A I S I N 1715,

T O T H E

R E T R E A T O F P R I N C E V A C H T A N G A F R O M T H E

F R O N T I E R S O F D A G I S T A N I N 1720.

C H A P. X.

MIR-ABDALLAH *brother of MIR-VAIS succeeds to the government of the* AFGHANS. MIR-MAGHMUD, *son of MIR-VAIS, discovers a design of* subjecting KANDAHAR, *murders his uncle, and is chosen king of that* country. *The ABDOLLEES dissatisfied. The adventure of EZADALLAH,* *who defeats the PERSIAN army, and makes himself master of HERAT.* *Hostilities committed by the KOURDS. Incursions of the OUSBEGS. Cha-* *rafter of the LESGEES, and their motives to invade PERSIA.*

1715. **T**HE effeminacy and weakness of the PERSIAN court seemed to devote the empire to ruin; so that instead of making a good use of the death of MIR-VAIS, SHAH HUSSEIN was disposed rather to quit all pretensions to KANDAHAR, than to bear any longer the inquietude that must attend all attempts to reduce this province: the emotions which he seemed to feel on this occasion, arose only from the apprehension he was under that the divan would oblige him to make fresh preparations against the rebels,

In

In the mean time, the AFGHANS met to nominate a successor to MIR-VAIS. This prince had left two sons; the rights of nature and gratitude pleaded in favour of either one or other of them; but as their tender years rendered them incapable of holding the reins of a government hardly settled, MIR-ABDALLAH, whom MIR-VAIS, his brother, had appointed his successor, was raised to the throne. This prince differed intirely from his predecessor: he had neither his genius, ambition, nor resolution: a timid circumspection, disguised under the name of prudence, constituted the principal part of his character. He soon convinced the AFGHANS that he was not born to supply the place of such a man as MIR-VAIS; for he was scarce invested with the supreme authority, when he formed a resolution of restoring KANDAHAR to the crown of PERSIA. This scheme being communicated to the tribe, they were divided in their opinions. Those of a timorous and peaceable disposition, and such as through age and infirmities, had less resolution than caution, despaired of being able to hold out long against so formidable a power as PERSIA. They compared their forces with the great armies of this monarchy, and looking upon themselves as already subdued, judged of the severity of their punishment by the damage they had done to their enemies. Thus they longed for a reconciliation, which they considered as the only means of screening themselves from the resentment of their ancient masters.

On the other hand, the military-men, and such whose youthful blood moved brisker in their veins, exclaimed against the project, the execution of which they concluded would plunge the whole nation into the extremest calamities, as they could no longer depend on any treaties with the PERSIANS; who would no sooner take possession of the strong holds of the kingdom, than without regarding the articles of peace, the observance of which themselves should not be able to enforce, would take signal vengeance for the infamy of so many defeats: "And what," said they, "should induce us to submit again to be shackled, after having so bravely recovered our liberty? What disgrace have we since suffered; or what advantages have the enemy had over us? Are we disheartened by our victories? Have we not the same arm and the same head? Or

1715. “ have we shaken off so odious a yoke, only to submit our necks to it
“ again, at a time when our courage might secure our liberty? Let us
“ rather boldly advance and attack our enemy on their own frontiers,
“ since they no longer dare to carry on the war in our country : or if you
“ are afraid of this attempt, tho’ the success is far from being dubious,
“ permit us at least to enjoy a tranquillity, which the terror of our arms
“ has hindered them so long from interrupting.” The last opinion was
not only the most noble, but likewise the most reasonable. In the low
state to which PERSIA was fallen, there was no just grounds for hurrying
the AFGHANS to a submission ; and if they must absolutely submit to a
master, it would have been more prudent to have chosen the MOGHOL,
whose interest it would have been to use them well ; than a nation whom
they had so grievously offended.

MIR-ABDALLAH had however taken his resolution, and finding it approved of by some of the chief men of the tribes, he bent his thoughts upon putting it in execution. His intention was to restore the city and the province to the crown of PERSIA on three conditions : The first, that the annual tribute which they paid before the revolt, should be taken off ; the second, that no foreign troops should be sent into the province ; and the third, that HUSSEIN should grant him the government of the kingdom, which should be hereditary in his family. In consequence of this resolution, they drew up the instructions of the deputies, whom they intended to send to ISFAHAN ; and as there was no reason to doubt but their proposals would be extremely welcome, every thing seemed to secure an approaching peace, when an accident happened which broke their measures. Though they endeavoured to conceal this intended negotiation, which they knew was disagreeable to the greatest part of the tribes ; it came to the knowledge of MIR-MAGHMUD, one of MIR-VAIS’s sons. This prince, who was about eighteen years of age, being provoked to see himself reduced to the condition of a subject, in a kingdom which he looked upon as his patrimony, had hitherto dissembled his resentment, from the expectation of a proper opportunity of shewing it. The aversion which the military part of the nation had to this treaty, made him
think

think that the time was now come to gratify his revenge; with this view 1715. he assembled about forty of his father's friends, who went with him to MIR-ABDALLAH's palace, and made themselves masters of it. The young MAGHMUD, as a specimen of that slaughter to which he afterwards familiarized himself, entered the apartment where his uncle was asleep, and killed him. Immediately the forty conspirators proclaimed the new sultan with loud acclamations, and the people alarmed at the sound of drums and other military instruments, with which the palace echoed, flocked thither to learn the cause of it.

MIR-MAGHMUD seeing the people assembled, made no scruple to acknowledge the parricide which he had just committed; but at the same time excused himself, by declaring his motive was the public good, as a proof of which, he read with a loud voice the instructions and other papers relating to the treaty which his uncle was on the point of concluding with the court of PERSIA. This treaty, as already mentioned, was odious to the greatest part of the nation, without whose knowledge it was entered upon: besides, MIR-MAGHMUD was son to the founder of their monarchy; and having been accustomed almost from his infancy to follow his father in all his expeditions, had on every occasion given signal proofs of his courage. These circumstances determined the people in his favour. The military men were the first who declared for him; and their suffrages having been confirmed by the rest of the tribes, he was with the general consent proclaimed king of KANDAHAR, six months after the death of MIR-VAIS.

This young prince had scarce ascended the throne, when several events happened, which seemed to presage the troubles and desolation which his reign was to produce; at the same time they removed a part of those obstacles which stood in the way of his ambition. The family, to whom 1717. ABAS the GREAT had given the government of HASARAI, being extinct, the kings his successors had subjected this province to the authority of a khan or governor, who, in their name, commanded in the province of HERAT. The ABDOLLEES, who, it has been already observed, submitted to PERSIA on condition of not being subject to foreign governors, were very

1717. very impatient under their yoke, when the circumstances of the times determined them to follow the example of the AFGHANS of KANDAHAR. The ABDOLLEES are a wandering nation, and like the AFGHANS divided into particular tribes. MAHOMMED ZAMON KHAN, then governor of the province, pleased with the agreeable countenance of EZADALLAH, son to a chief of one of these tribes, demanded him of the father. Allured by the advantages which he expected, the parent used all his persuasion to engage his son to live with the KHAN. The young man heard the proposal with indignation; so that the father determined to use his authority. This induced EZADALLAH, in conjunction with some young men, to kill his father, and caused himself to be acknowledged chief of the tribe in his stead.

MAHOMMED ZAMON KHAN was soon informed of this action; and determined to punish the delinquent, not only as a parricide, but lest so bold a step should be followed by an insurrection. The KHAN accordingly ordered five hundred horse to march against EZADALLAH's party, who boldly met them, and routed the PERSIAN troops. The governor shocked at this disgrace, thought seriously of preventing the ill consequences of it. He therefore assembled his troops at HERAT, the capital of the province; and not chusing to trust the execution of an affair of this importance to any other person, he took the command of them himself, and marched towards the camp of the rebels. EZADALLAH, now at the head of two thousand men, went to meet the PERSIANS: he divided his troops into two bodies; one he ordered to lie in ambush, and with the other he waited for the enemy on the banks of the river MORGA. At length the PERSIAN army appeared; and the KHAN seeing so small a number of the ABDOLLEES, confident of victory, charged the enemy without precaution; when the troops that lay in ambush sallied forth with loud shouts and cries, which surprized and terrified the PERSIANS, inso-much that they turned their backs, and fled with the utmost precipitation to HERAT.

The young EZADALLAH, transported by his youth and courage, followed the enemy so close, that he entered with them pell-mell into the

town. The inhabitants had formerly been of the sect of the SUNNIS; 1717. several had still preserved their ancient religion; and there were some families descended from the ancient kings of the country. These circumstances, together with the lenity with which the inhabitants of KANDAHAR had been treated by MIR-VAIS, and the tyrannical extortion of the PERSIAN governors, induced the people to declare in favour of the ABDOLLES; insomuch that having joined with them in putting the garrison to the sword, the city was soon delivered from the PERSIAN yoke. This revolution happened in the year 1717. EZADALLAH in less than three months got possession of the other strong places in the province, whose fidelity had been shaken by the example of the capital; and HERAT became an independent republic, in which its deliverer held the most considerable rank.

This year, the KOURDS, a restless roving people, situated west of IRAC- 1719. AGEMI^P, appeared in arms at the gates of HAMADAN, and wasted the country round that city. They carried their insolence so far, as to commit robberies under the walls of ISFAHAN, where they took away a number of horses belonging to the king.

These hostilities and the revolt of HERAT, were not the only incidents that alarmed the court. The OUSBEGS^Q, a warlike tribe, whom their vicinity to PERSIA renders enemies to that crown, taking advantage of these circumstances, carried terror and desolation into the northern part of the vast province of KHORASSAN. At the same time, new troubles arose on the western shores of the CASPIAN SEA.

The province of DAGISTAN^R, inhabited by the LESGEE TARTARS, are MAHOMMEDANS^S of the sect of SUNNI. The ferocity of their natural disposition, joined to the sterility of their hills^T, have induced them often to

^P This is part of the country of the ancient PARTHIANS. AGEM signifies barbarous or stranger, with regard to the ARABS.

^Q This name signifies free and independent. They are generally understood to be the TARTARS of KHIEVA and BOKHARA, and take in also those of SAMARCAND, which flourished in the time of TAMERLANE. These people are comely, well-shaped, and active; much given to robbery, but make good soldiers. See G. THOMPSON's account of them, Vol. I.

^R DAGH, a mountain; DAGISTAN, a mountainous country. It is sometimes wrote DAGHESTAN. I have given an account of these people in my 1st volume.

^S Formerly some of them were christians.

^T Their vallies however are fruitful.

1719. to infest the neighbouring provinces. ABAS II. upon his accession to the crown, came to an accommodation with them, and promised to pay annually, by way of subsidy, a certain sum to each tribe. Each of them promised to send every year an embassador to the king, with a present of two calves skins, and two lambs skins; as an acknowledgment of his sovereignty; and a peace was concluded on these conditions. As it was the interest of the LESGEES, they observed this treaty inviolate, as long as the subsidies agreed to were paid them; but the 1700 tomans^u, appointed for that use, having for several years been applied to other purposes, by the avaricious ministers of HUSSEIN, these people had recourse again to arms, and renewed their excursions.

CHAP. XI.

The court prepares to attack the ABDOLLEES and OUSBEGS. SEFFIE KOULI KAHN is made general. Battle between the PERSIANS and ABDOLLEES. The MASCATS take possession of BAHARAIN. LUTF ALI KHAN is chosen general, and marches towards the PERSIAN gulf, and beats the rebels. MIR-MAGHMUD marches at the same time towards KHERMAN. The domestic enemies of the PERSIAN general cabal against him. The ATHEMAT-DOULET is confined, and his eyes plucked out. LUTF ALI KHAN is carried prisoner to ISFAHAN, and the PERSIAN army disbanded.

SHAH HUSSEIN astonished to see so many provinces declare against him, at length roused from his lethargy. The ABDOLLEES and OUSBEGS having entered into a confederacy, appeared to be the most formidable of his enemies: he resolved therefore to make an extraordinary effort against them; and having deliberated some time on the choice of a general, he chose SEFFIE KOULI KHAN. This nobleman had been invested some years with the post of DIVAN-BEGHI^w of ISFAHAN; but upon discovering, that the king was so far prejudiced by his enemies, as to look upon the rectitude with which he discharged his office, as an excessive severity, he voluntarily resigned it, and withdrew from court.

^u 4,200 l.

^w Lord chief-justice.

SEFFIE KOULI KHAN was now sensible of the difficulties he should encounter in so dangerous a commission, and of the oppositions he should find in the execution of his office, from the prevailing faction, by whom he was not beloved. These considerations engaged him to refuse so delicate, though at the same time so glorious an employment : but the court hit upon a very artful expedient to engage him to accept of it : this was to send to his only son, a horse richly caparisoned, a spear, a buckler, a cuirass covered with gold brocade, and a turban enriched with diamonds. Such presents are never made, except when the king intends to invest some person with an absolute authority, such as that of generalissimo. The father saw plainly the snare that was laid for him ; but he who had presumed to refuse his sovereign, could not withstand the solicitations of a son whom he tenderly loved. This young nobleman, at the age of seventeen, was therefore declared generalissimo of the forces of the empire ; and his father, as the court foresaw, determined to accompany him in the expedition. He accordingly assembled a considerable body of troops, and both of them repaired to ISFAHAN to receive the king's orders. The young general met with the most flattering marks of distinction : the king made a public entertainment for him, and girt his sword to his side, in presence of the whole court ; and in order to give him an opportunity of shewing his dexterity, he ordered tilts and tournaments in the MEIDAN^x, in which this young lord gained the applause of all the spectators.

After this kind of anticipated triumph, the general set out for the camp, in company with his father. His army consisted of 30,000 men, chosen troops ; so that it was reasonable to expect success from such a body of forces, conducted, tho' under another's name, by so experienced a general as SEFFIE KOULI KHAN. These expectations seemed to be confirmed by an event, which soon after ensued ; for scarce had the PERSIANS entered the province of HERAT, when they fell in with a body of 12,000 OUSBEGS, who were marching to the assistance of the ABDOLLEES ; and attacking them briskly, cut them in pieces.

This

^x The principal square in ISFAHAN.

1719. This first enterprize raised the courage of the victors, but EZADALLAH, more enraged than intimidated by this disgrace, thought only of recovering his loss by a new engagement, which was to decide the fate of the province of HERAT. EZADALLAH, at the head of only 15,000 horse, was not afraid to offer battle to an army which had double the number of men, and had likewise the advantage of a formidable train of artillery. During the course of this war, there was not a more obstinate engagement. The PERSIANS and the ABDOLLEES, equally animated, the one to avoid the shame of being vanquished, and the other by the desire of preserving their liberty, fought without intermission from sun-rise; and at one in the afternoon, the victory was still undetermined, when the inattention of those who commanded the artillery, decided the fate of the day. These officers, not having observed that their own troops occupied a post which the ABDOLLEES had just quitted, fired upon them; and the PERSIANS, knowing that the enemy had no cannon, were surprized and thrown into confusion. The chiefs themselves apprehended treachery, and seemed irresolute in regard to what step they should take; when EZADALLAH tried to avail himself of a circumstance, the cause of which was perhaps unknown to him. He therefore renewed the charge with fresh vigour, and meeting with only a faint resistance, from men who were uneasy and intimidated, he pierced their squadrons, and obliged them to turn their backs.

EZADALLAH spurred on by his hatred to the PERSIANS, and his desire of enjoying all the advantages of his victory, pursued the enemy a whole day. The PERSIANS lost in the action and flight 8000 men, among whom was their general, and his father SEFFIE KOULI KHAN, who were killed in the retreat. Their baggage, the military chest, and 20 pieces of cannon fell also into the hands of the ABDOLLEES; who on their part lost 3000 men; which, to an infant republic, could be compensated only by the liberty obtained by that memorable engagement.

The PERSIAN armies being thus unfortunate, new enemies declared against HUSSEIN. The MASCATS are a tribe of ARABIANS^y, whose country is the promontory towards the isle of ORMUS, which forms the

streights

^y The country over against GOMBROON, on the northern coast of ARABIA.

streights of the PERSIAN gulf. These people are MAHOMMEDANS of a particular sect, yet more conformable to that of the SUNNIS, than of the SCHIAS^z: they are subject to an IMAN^a, who has an absolute authority over them. This prince taking advantage of the melancholy state to which the kingdom of PERSIA was reduced, had already made himself master of the isle of BAHARAIN^b; and, not content with this success, he threatened to take possession of BENDER ABASSI^c.

The court of PERSIA, unable to face all her enemies at once, seemed to have taken the resolution of arming only against those who declared last. They determined therefore to make preparations in order to oppose the designs of those ARABS; and as affairs were now reduced to an extremity by their late defeat at HERAT, FATEY ALI KHAN, at that time ATHEMAT DOULET^d, offered to march thither in person; but the king fearing lest he should be rendered too powerful, by adding the authority of generalissimo to his present employment, returned him thanks, and appointed LUTF ALI KHAN, brother-in-law to that minister, to command the expedition.

In the beginning of the year 1720, this general marched a body of twenty thousand men to the neighbourhood of BENDER ABASSI; and as the PERSIANS have no ships in that sea, he waited for the PORTUGUESE fleet, which, pursuant to the treaty concluded with the viceroy of that nation, was to sail from GOA, in order to transport his troops to the isle of BAHARAIN. This fleet, consisting of four large vessels, fifteen pinks^e, and some other transports, arrived soon after, and met with a kind reception from LUTF ALI KHAN. But whether it was that he did not think this fleet strong enough to engage that of the MASCATS, or whether his enemies at court had with-held the money designed for this use;

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he

^z PERSIAN sect. ^a An ecclesiastical sovereign. ^b BAHARAIN signifies the two seas. An island famous for the PEARL fishery; it takes its name from a province of ARABIA FELIX, situated near it, between the RED SEA, and the PERSIAN gulf. ^c This place was called GOMBROON, before ABAS I. had put it in the condition in which it is at present. To effect this, he made use of the materials of the city of ORMUS, which he had lately demolished. BENDER is of the same signification as DERBEND, viz. port or fence of iron; BENDER ABASSI being properly the strong port of ABAS. ^d Prime minister, as already explained. ^e Vessels of 1 or 200 tons, commonly known by this name.

1720. he did not pay the sum that had been stipulated: the officer who commanded the fleet proposed to send for a reinforcement, if the KHAN thought it proper; but finding this also ineffectual to obtain the payment, he prepared to sail back again to GOA. In the mean time the enemy apprehending lest the PORTUGUESE fleet should be reinforced, resolved to attack them. Accordingly their vessels sailed from the port of MASCAT, and soon appeared at the mouth of the strait; the PORTUGUESE weighed anchor, and prepared to receive them; but having lost a small vessel in the engagement, which in other respects was not favourable to them, they retired in the night, and sailed directly for GOA. LUTF ALI KHAN thus became desperate, as this accident disappointed all his projects; and he was reduced to the necessity of defending the coast against the insults of the MASCATS, when a signal occasion happened of distinguishing his valour.

No sooner had MIR MAGHMUD deprived MIR ABDALLAH his uncle of his life and throne, than he seemed desirous of justifying so daring an action by some signal exploit. The PERSIANS had made no attempt for a long time against KANDAHAR; and the incursions of the LESGEES, the KOURDS, and the OUSBEGS, together with the uneasiness occasioned by the taking of BAHARAIN, and the revolt of HERAT, left no room to apprehend the least danger from that quarter. And with regard to INDIA, the domestic troubles of that empire secured him sufficiently against the enterprizes of the MOGHOL, as will appear from the following relation:

MAHOMMED FURRUKHSIR, the GREAT MOGHOL, having advanced SEYD ABDALLAH KHAN to the title of vizir^f, and his brother HASSAN ALI KHAN being the general pay-master^g of the army; by their intrigues they acquired an unlimited authority, and at length seized on the person of their sovereign, and deprived him of his sight. In FEBRUARY 1719, they accomplished their work, and put him to an ignominious death, after a reign of seven years: they then chose RAFFEEIH AL DIRJAT, a prince of the imperial blood, who had been for some time confined in the

^f He had also that of KOTEB AL MULUCK, or axis of the empire, and IAR-BA-VAFA the grateful friend

^g MIR BUKHSHI.

the castle of SELIMGUR, but this prince dying a natural death, a few 1720. days after these ministers proclaimed prince SUJAMBADOUR.

This new election was not attended like the former, with the unanimous consent of the people; for the inhabitants of AGRA, then esteemed the capital of the empire, proclaimed NASR O DIN MAHOMMED SHAH^H, a grand-son of the famous AURING-ZEBE; and both parties being obstinately bent to support the emperor whom they had chosen, this double election was soon followed by a civil war. After several battles, the grand vizir apprehending that it would be a long time before the dispute could be determined by force of arms, resolved to bribe the principal inhabitants of AGRA, who opened their gates to him, and delivered up NASR O DIN MAHOMMED SHAH. But this event produced a very different effect from what might have been naturally expected; for a report being spread some days after, that prince SAJAMBADOUR had been put to death at DEHLI, NASR O DIN MAHOMMED, who considered himself as a sacrifice to the security of his rival, was not only set at liberty, but acknowledged as emperor by both parties. And though the report was false; as they were heartily tired of the war, both parties agreed to put SAJAMBADOUR to death.

It is very remarkable, that the grand vizir and his brother acted with such cunning, as to preserve their whole authority during these troubles, though they soon became great objects of jealousy. By disbanding the armies, they had restored peace, but neither their own power, nor that of the emperor, were sufficiently fixed, to engage them in an enterprize; the issue of which had been always fatal to the MOGHOLS.

As MIR MAGHMUD¹ was free from any apprehension on this side, he employed his thoughts intirely about the execution of his favourite design. MIR VAIS during his confinement at the court of PERSIA, had discovered so much of the weakness of the government, that it has been thought he then aspired not only at making himself master of the province of KANDAR-

HAR,

^H NASR O DIN signifies the supporter and assister of religion. This is the same prince whom the PERSIAN usurper NADIR invaded 20 years afterwards.

¹ He is often called also MAGHMUD only; MIR has been already explained, page 29. and for this reason the hyphen between the words I discontinue as unnecessary.

1720. HAR, but likewise of subduing the whole monarchy. Be that as it may, MIR MAGHMUD now prepared for this great enterprize; but as his reputation was not yet sufficiently established, to venture to propose it to the AFGHANS, he resolved to engage in some expedition, by the success of which he might expect to gain their confidence. With this view, he assembled the chief men of the nation towards the year 1720, and having laid open his design to them, he caused a proclamation to be made, that whoever was willing to march with him against the enemy, should repair with his horse and armour to a certain place by him appointed. By this means he raised about 10,000 men, and putting himself at the head of them, he took the road to KHERMAN, while LUTF ALI KHAN was advancing with his army towards BENDER ABASSI.

That part of SEGISTAN, which separates the province of KHERMAN from the kingdom^k of KANDAHAR, is a country in which for fifteen days march there is nothing but sandy plains, with very few inhabitants. These difficulties did not deter MIR MAGHMUD; on the contrary he was desirous on this occasion to try the courage and resolution of his troops: besides, as he had laid a scheme to penetrate very soon by that road into the heart of PERSIA, it was a point of some importance to be acquainted with the nature of that country. He knew that water is scarce in those parts, and what little is found is hardly potable; this induced him to take the smaller number of horses and mules, and to mount his AFGHANS two or three on a camel, this animal being inured to thirst. As soon as he arrived on the frontier, he ordered these camels to be loaded with water, and in the same manner every soldier to fill the sheeps guts which they carried for this purpose like a girdle about their waists; and thus prepared, the army entered these deserts. He met no opposition during his march: the difficulties which he defied by taking this rout, constituted his security; but as the want of water, provisions, and forage, of which it was impossible to carry a sufficient quantity with them, together with the scorching heat of the sun, supplied in some measure the place of enemies, he lost two thousand men,

^k The reader must observe, that kingdom and province are sometimes used for the same country, not only according to the ORIENTAL expression, but that by revolutions they are rendered independent sovereignties upon many occasions.

men, and a considerable number of beasts of burthen. The AFGHANS, 1720. however, encouraged by the promises and example of their prince, bore with all these hardships, and at length passed the deserts. They had scarce appeared on the frontier of KHERMAN, when the khan of this province having no troops to oppose them, retired with his family. MIR MAGHMUD entered the country without fighting, and pursuing his march, came and refreshed his army in the very capital ^k of the province.

Tho' that city had opened her gates to MAGHMUD, yet he behaved as a conqueror: he laid heavy contributions, as well on the merchants, as the citizens, and put numbers of them to cruel tortures; suffering his troops to live at discretion: so that these miserable people experienced all the horrors and calamities of war, without having had the consolation of attempting to defend their lives and properties. They had been now four months subject to this tyrannical yoke, when LUTF ALI KHAN came and rescued them from oppression. This general, who was obliged to wait for enemies whom he could not go in search of, no sooner heard of what had passed in the province of KHERMAN, than he marched thither with a body of chosen troops. Fortune, which had been so favourable to the AFGHANS, now deserted them; for their little army was defeated and put to flight. The news of so important and unexpected a victory, being brought to TÆHIRAN, where the king was lately arrived, suspended the uneasiness of this prince, as well as of the whole court.

In the mean time, LUTF ALI KHAN perceiving that KHERMAN was the only place that could stop MAGHMUD, on the side of these deserts, fortified that part which is called the upper town, and serves as a citadel; after which he left a strong garrison in the place, and joined the main body of his army. Whether it was from a thirst of revenge of his enemies at court, who had considerable estates in those parts; or that he was obliged to have recourse to this expedient, in order to maintain his army; LUTF ALI KHAN laid heavy contributions on the country, ta-

king

^k This city, which bears the same name as the province, is famous all over the east for the beauty of the fashies and stuffs manufactured there. The wool, of which they are made, comes chiefly from the neighbouring mountains: it is said that when their sheep brouze on new grafs, the whole fleece falls off, and leaves the sheep as if they had been shorn. Their wool is certainly allowed to be the finest and best we know of, and draws thither a number of INDIAN merchants.

1720. king all their arms, horses and camels; and dividing his forces into different bodies, he quartered them upon the inhabitants at discretion. This continued till the autumn, when the army marched for SHIRASS, the capital of FARSISTAN, which had been pitched upon as the general rendezvous. The troops assembled there in the month of NOVEMBER 1720, and a better appointed army had not been seen for many years in PERSIA. Their camp enjoyed great plenty; a vast quantity of provisions and ammunition having been amassed by means of several thousands of camels, which were employed for that purpose. The troops, encouraged also by the victory at KHERMAN, were impatient to be led against the enemy; and every thing seemed to presage the ruin of the AFGHANS, against whom all these preparations were making. But in spite of these favourable circumstances, PERSIA seemed devoted to ruin; for the general was arrested and sent a prisoner to court, and the whole army at once dispersed.

This sudden change was owing to those lords, whose lands had been lately ravaged by LUTF ALI KHAN: incensed at the disregard which he had shewn them on this occasion, they figured to themselves how low their own interest would be reduced, if so great a piece of service, as the reduction of KANDAHAR, were added to the credit which the general had already acquired with the king, on account of his first victory. They resolved therefore to employ every engine of falsehood and malice, to prevent his marching upon that expedition; and despairing to succeed in their design, so long as FATEY ALI KHAN continued in his office, this minister was the first victim whom they undertook to sacrifice to their own imaginary security.

The method which they took to attain their end, was as bold as it was wicked. The king's chief MULLAH¹, and the HAKEM BACHI^m, who were concerned in the plot, entered this prince's bed-chamber in the middle of the night, and imploring his pardon for so daring an intrusion, informed him of the imminent danger which he was in: they told him with all the appearance of the utmost consternation, that they had just discovered a conspiracy formed against his majesty's crown and life: that

LUTF

¹ Either the PICHE-NAHMAZ, or great almoner; or the KHODAFI, the chaplain.
chief physician.

^m The

LUTF ALI KHAN was to enter ISFAHAN with his army, and to seize on the royal family; while the ATHEMAT DOULETⁿ, supported by a body of 3000 KOURDS, who were on their march, under the command of a prince of that nation, was to secure his majesty's person: that there was not a moment to lose, for this very night the conspirators intended to execute their execrable design. In proof of what they had advanced, they produced a letter, which they pretended had been written by the prime minister to the prince of the KOURDS. This letter had the counterfeit of the royal seal upon it: SHAH HUSSEIN no sooner cast his eyes upon the seal, than imagining he knew it, he concluded he was undone, and his terror deprived him of his senses. While he was coming to himself, a council was called in a hurry, composed of some of the principal eunuchs, who were accomplices with the two accusers; and after a very short consultation, the king sent for the KURCHI BACHI^o, and commanded him to go with what number of soldiers he could get together, to break open the prime minister's house, and to bring him his head. 1720.

This order however was not strictly executed; for the eunuchs intending to oblige him to make a discovery of his effects, which they hoped would be confiscated in their favour, represented to the king that it was not proper to put him to death if he made no resistance; to which SHAH HUSSEIN acquiesced. The ATHEMAT DOULET, who was asleep in his harram, made no scruple to obey: as soon as he was brought to the KURCHI BACHI, his eyes were plucked out, as if he had been convicted of high-treason; after which, under a pretext of extorting a confession of his accomplices, and the circumstances of the conspiracy, but in reality to force him to discover his effects, he was put to the torture.

No sooner was this wild resolution taken of arresting the ATHEMAT DOULET, than messengers were dispatched on every side to secure the relations and friends of this unfortunate minister. The commission however seemed difficult to execute in regard to LUTF ALI KHAN his brother-in-law;

ⁿ Prime minister.
to his majesty's household.

^o The general of the KURCHIS, one of the troops of horse belonging

1720. in-law; and it would have been so indeed, if this general had been guilty of the crime with which he was charged. The governor of SHIRASS was ordered by the king to intice him into the town, and there to seize on his person, and send him under a proper guard to ISFAHAN. The governor found no difficulty in executing his commission; for LUTF ALI KHAN, having no design but to march against the enemies of his country, suspected no evil. Such was the reward which this general received for his signal services. His disgrace was followed with the dispersion of the whole army; for the khans and other lords, who commanded the different bodies of which it was composed, apprehending from this example that they should be called to an account for the depredations committed in KHERMAN, retired to their own estates; insomuch, that of this flourishing army, which promised security to PERSIA, in a few days nothing remained, except the artillery, ammunition, and provisions.

In the mean time every thing was in confusion at TEHRAN, where they were making preparations to defend themselves against the three thousand KOURDS who were hourly expected; but as soon as it was day, and the king saw that no enemy appeared, and had also been informed by people arrived from different quarters, and by the several bodies of horse which were sent out as scouts, that every thing was perfectly quiet in the neighbourhood, this deluded prince began to suspect that they had imposed upon him. Under this suspence he sent for the HAKIM BACHI, and with a very severe tone, which he seldom assumed, he bid him take care that the wounds they had made in the ATHEMAT DOULET, by plucking out his eyes, did not endanger his life, for that he should answer for it. This declaration in all probability saved the life of that unfortunate man; whose barbarous enemies would probably have taken his life also, from an apprehension lest he should ruin them by detecting the villainous falsity of all their impostures.

The ATHEMAT DOULET recovered; and the couriers, who had been sent, bringing intelligence that the army had made no motion, the SHAH was confirmed in his suspicions, and resolved to examine the affair in a juridical manner.

C H A P. XII.

A divan is held, in which the king presides, to examine into the conduct of the ATHEMAT DOULET. Articles of accusation brought against him; his answer and defence.

THE day being fixed for the trial of this great cause, the king de- 1720.
 T terminated to preside in person at the divan, which was composed of all the ministers and great officers of state. The prisoner being brought into the court, the session was opened with a recital of the several articles of complaint. The crimes laid to his charge were chiefly these, viz.
 “ I. That he had written and sealed with the royal seal, of which he
 “ was the depository in virtue of his office of prime minister, a letter by
 “ which he desired one of the princes of the KOURDS, to bring a body
 “ of 3000 men with him to TÆHIRAN, in order to seize on the person
 “ of the king. II. That he had maintained a correspondence with the
 “ LESGEES, from his attachment to the sect of the SUNNIS which he
 “ professed; and that he had written a letter to one of their chiefs, which
 “ was also produced, and by which he gave him intelligence that they
 “ might continue their depredations with all security, provided they did
 “ not advance towards ERIVAN, where one of his nephews commanded.
 “ III. That he had said one day, when he was in the city of KOOM, at
 “ the tomb of SHAH SULIMAN, by whose orders his father had been put
 “ to death; that the time would come, when he would revenge his
 “ father’s death, by that of SHAH HUSSEIN, his son, and all the royal
 “ family.” But this last accusation had no other proof to support it,
 than the deposition of this minister’s valet de chambre.

Besides these three capital articles, several others were added, which seemed to be rather reproaches against his conduct, than subjects of accusation. It was laid to his charge, that he had decided all affairs of himself, and without the advice of the council, and the other ministers. That his orders were more respected in the provinces, than those of the king. That he had married his daughters and nieces to the principal lords

1720. lords of the kingdom, from whence it was inferred that he intended to form a powerful party. That he had disposed of the government of provinces to his nephews, who were but children: and lastly, that as his estate by his own acknowledgment, amounted to the sum of nine hundred thousand tomans^p, it was impossible he could have amassed such immense wealth, without extortion, or, at least, embezzlement of the royal revenues.

These were the articles of complaint against this minister: upon which the king having asked him whether he had any thing to say in his defence, he turned towards the place from whence he heard the voice, and addressed the king with a heroic firmness, but in a respectful tone. “Great
“ prince, the justification which you require of your slave, would be
“ intirely usefess, were it intended for no other purpose than to preserve
“ his life, in the deplorable situation to which malice and imposture have
“ reduced him: life is now become a load to him, undeserving of such
“ care. But since his honour, and the glory which his family has ac-
“ quired in the service of your august ancestors, do not permit him to be
“ silent, while envy and malice are raising their batteries against him, he
“ will convince your majesty, that if you had deigned to hear him be-
“ fore you pronounced his sentence, it would have been as easy to con-
“ found the calumny of his accusers, as to ward off the fatal blow with
“ which his innocence has been oppressed.”

After this tacit reproach, the ATHEMAT DOULET ceasing to address himself in direct terms to the king, continued his discourse to this effect:

“ If the pretended conspiracy had not been the means projected, by
“ which my enemies have ruined me, they would never have thought
“ of so absurd, as well as heavy a charge against me. Does not this im-
“ posture refute itself? When was it they intercepted this fatal letter,
“ which has served as a foundation to this monstrous structure of ini-
“ quity? Was it sent from TÆHIRAN; and intercepted before it came
“ to hand? Or returned to them from the KOURDS? The KOURDS were
“ to make their appearance that night; if the letter was intercepted, how
“ was that possible, for these rebels had twelve days march to make?
“ the

“ the letter must consequently have been a long time in the hands of
 “ my accusers, which renders them accomplices of my supposed crime:
 “ therefore the chief to whom I wrote, must have sent it back: but if
 “ so, why should they have been afraid of those troops? And if they con-
 “ trived to take it from him upon his march, who is it that has hindered
 “ this prince from appearing before our gates? Let my enemies explain
 “ themselves; how is this important piece come hither: and why have
 “ they waited for the very moment in which the conspiracy was to take
 “ effect, before they shewed it to their majesties?

“ The circumstances with which these informers corroborate their ac-
 “ cusation, plainly shew their imposture. They say that I intended that
 “ very night with three thousand men to lay hands on the sacred person
 “ of my sovereign, surrounded by his courtiers, and by a guard of fifteen
 “ thousand men; and yet they found me asleep in my harram, with no
 “ other people about me than my own domestics. LUTF ALI KHAN,
 “ who is supposed to have intended at the same time to take possession
 “ of the capital, we do not hear has made any motion at all with his
 “ troops; and the prince of the KOURDS, to whom I am said to have
 “ ordered the gates of the city to be opened that night, is sixty farfangs^a
 “ distant from the frontier, and has not set his foot in the province. I
 “ shall not dwell any longer on the refutation of this part of the charge;
 “ their majesties have too much penetration not to see easily into the ab-
 “ surdity of it. I shall proceed to the other crimes of which I am ac-
 “ cused.”

“ It is true, I am a SUNNI^r, as my ancestors were; nor have I ever
 “ sacrificed my faith to the security of my fortune; but I never kept it
 “ a secret from the king, nor from the rest of the nation; and their
 “ majesties, by entrusting me with the administration of affairs, plainly
 “ shewed that this difference of persuasion was no just reason for doubt-
 “ ing of my allegiance. But they have produced a letter, which they
 “ pretend I wrote to a chief of the LESGEES, encouraging those people
 “ to continue their depredations. Is it not evident that this is an artifice
 “ like

^a A farfang is four ENGLISH miles.^r Sect of the TURKS.

1720. “ like the former? Is there any great difficulty in counterfeiting a BUL^s
 “ in a country, where the most experienced SARAF^t can hardly discern
 “ a piece of spurious coin from that which has passed thro’ the royal mint.
 “ These dumb testimonies determine nothing, if they are not supported
 “ by other proofs: and what other proofs have they to alledge against
 “ me? Every one knows, that the king having enjoined me by a special
 “ commission to suppress the insolence of those mountaineers, I charged
 “ my nephew with this expedition. Now this young man, whom I
 “ loved as my son, and had publicly adopted as my heir, was slain by
 “ those very LESGEES, with whom they pretend I held a criminal cor-
 “ respondence: and surely his unhappy catastrophe is a full justification
 “ of my conduct in this particular. The depredations of those people
 “ ought not to be laid to my charge, but to those who were the cause
 “ of them, by converting to their own use, for several successive years,
 “ the subsidies granted by treaty to the LESGEES.

“ With respect to the execrable menaces which they accuse me of
 “ having uttered at KOOM, surely it would be a matter of amazement to
 “ all the world, if in so numerous a family as that of an ATHEMAT
 “ DOULET, there was not one domestic to be found whom money could
 “ corrupt. But tho’ this testimony is not sufficient, according to law;
 “ yet there is the highest reason, since the sacred person of the prince
 “ is concerned, that no means should be neglected that can confirm or
 “ invalidate his allegation. Let this wretch be therefore put to the rack,
 “ and he will declare the persons by whom he has been corrupted; by
 “ which means perhaps a complete discovery will be made of the ini-
 “ quitous designs of my enemies. This,” continued the minister, “ is
 “ what I have to answer to the former parts of my charge; and it will
 “ be as easy to justify myself in the latter.

“ During my whole administration, I never determined upon any af-
 “ fair of moment without the king’s express directions: for the truth of
 “ this I appeal to their majesties, who know it best. As to the ordinary
 “ business

^s The BUL generally contains the name of the person, oftentimes with the addition of a moral sentence, engraved on a seal, which they use with ink, as described in Vol. I. Chap. 47. in the manner as EUROPEANS subscribe their names.

^t A money changer.

“ business of my ministry, I always consulted certain persons who now 1720.
“ make this complaint, till I found them disaffected to my person, and
“ too much attached to their own private interest, to give me any counsel
“ capable of promoting the public good. If those very persons, who
“ now seem so tender of the respect due to the supreme authority, had
“ not often caused the orders sent into the provinces, even in the king’s
“ name, to be revoked, they would not have the boldness to accuse me
“ of a fault of which they are conscious of being guilty themselves. For
“ my own part, I observed a quite different conduct, by making it a
“ rule never to retract, either through interest or solicitation, whatever I
“ had once determined, after a thorough knowledge of the matter.

“ I could not have expected, I own, that I should be accused of having
“ settled my daughters and nieces in a manner suitable to my dignity and
“ their birth. Do my enemies imagine, that a minister so greatly fa-
“ voured by his master, should forget himself to that degree, as to seek
“ husbands for his daughters from among the dregs of the people; or
“ dishonour the blood of the ancient kings of DAGHESTAN, from which
“ he has the honour of being descended? Would they have me court
“ the protection of eunuchs, and ally my family with their creatures and
“ domestics? But not satisfied with reproaching me for the advantageous
“ settlement of my daughters; they require me to make an excuse for
“ the king’s indulgence, in granting the government of some provinces
“ to two of my nephews. It is true, I solicited that favour, but not
“ without a precedent; since their majesties had granted it to others who
“ were never censured for it. Thus, great prince,” continued he, “ the
“ fury of my enemies has transported them so far, that they are not afraid
“ of challenging me for your goodness. They demand of me an account
“ of my effects, and forgetting that I hold the greatest part of what I
“ possess from the royal bounty; can they pretend to be ignorant that I
“ was born to a great estate, that I inherit my brother’s fortunes, and
“ that the good œconomy with which I have always lived, has increased
“ my property. I intended to leave all to my nephews, and my daugh-
“ ters; and so natural a consideration might have justified my parsimony:
“ but what pretext have my enemies for their insatiable avarice! have
“ they

1720. " they any such relations, or are they capable of heirs " ? What use would
 " they make of their riches, unless they would send every year to MECCA
 " and MEDINA camels loaded with wealth, and violate with impunity
 " the laws of the kingdom, by which such pilgrimages are expressly
 " forbidden ? "

The ATHEMAT DOULET having finished his vindication ; his accusers
 alledged against him further, that the expedition of BAHARAIN had mis-
 carried by his collusion with the officers of the PORTUGUESE fleet : that
 in conjunction with LUTF ALI KHAN, he had betrayed the interests of
 the state, by not making a proper use of the consternation of the rebels
 after the victory of KHERMAN by laying siege to KANDAHAR ; charging
 him with all the violences committed upon the sea coast towards the
 end of the campaign, and insisting on his declaring the motives that en-
 gaged his brother-in-law to march towards SHIRASS, instead of leading
 his army, as the court intended, against the AFGHANS.

" I might very easily," replied the minister, " avoid entering into any
 " discussion upon this subject ; for it would be sufficient for me to al-
 " ledge, that since no man is answerable for more than his own actions,
 " I cannot, without manifest injustice, be charged with any faults com-
 " mitted by my brother : but the conduct of this general has been so
 " prudent and so agreeable to the real interests of the state, that I am not
 " afraid to be answerable for his military operations. All the world
 " knows, that the great SHAH ABAS having dispossessed the PORTUGUESE
 " of the isle of ORMUS, by the assistance of the ENGLISH fleet^w ; this
 " prince, in order to preserve his conquest, without being obliged to
 " maintain a number of ships, concluded a peace with them, and con-
 " sented to let them have the moiety of the duties collected in the island,
 " which was afterwards valued at a certain sum. It is also well known,
 " that the funds appropriated to this use have been for many years applied
 " to other purposes : the ambassador whom their majesties appoint to
 " reside

^v Here he alludes to the eunuchs.

^w ALFONSO DE ALBUQUERQUE conquered the isle
 and city of ORMUS in 1507 ; it was taken again by the PERSIANS in 1622, when the ENGLISH had
 a grant of duties at BENDER ABASSI the new town.

“ reside at GOA, could not therefore engage the viceroy to send his fleet 1720.
 “ into that sea, without promising to pay part of the arrears. But LUTF
 “ ALI KHAN not being able to perform such agreement, for want of the
 “ money, which was never remitted to him, as we can easily prove, the
 “ PORTUGUESE commander, incensed at this breach of promise, not only
 “ refused to take our troops on board, but put back to sea. This is the
 “ plain matter of fact, the truth of which will be attested, if necessary,
 “ by the commissary of this very fleet, who is now at ISFAHAN.

“ But LUTF ALI KHAN, they pretend, ought to have made a proper
 “ use of his victory, by forcing the rebels in their own capital*. Is it
 “ possible that such arguments as these should come from persons who
 “ concern themselves in the administration of public affairs? Is it not
 “ well known, that this general had only a detachment of his army with
 “ him? Would it have been right in him, without ammunition or pro-
 “ visions, to undertake, just after the harvest, the siege of a place ex-
 “ tremely well fortified, and defended by an army double the number
 “ of his own? He was too prudent to take so rash a step, but contented
 “ himself, for that time, with putting the city of KHERMAN in a posture
 “ of defence; and I am not afraid to own, that it was by my advice he
 “ afterwards joined the main body of his army. Having afterwards de-
 “ termined to carry the war into the province of KANDAHAR, he set
 “ about making the necessary preparations for this great expedition. He
 “ was then obliged to make the province† furnish the money and pro-
 “ visions for the subsistence of his troops; and if in the execution of
 “ those orders, there was a mixture of prejudice or resentment, this is a
 “ fault that ought not to be ranked amongst crimes committed against
 “ the state.

“ Such was the real cause of those irregularities which have been so
 “ greatly exaggerated. In regard to the motives which determined LUTF
 “ ALI KHAN to advance towards SHIRASS, it is easy to account for them.
 “ This general, grown wise by the fatal example of KHOSROFF KHAN,
 “ had

* KANDAHAR.

† KHERMANIA.

1720. “ had determined to surprize the rebels, lest they should destroy the
 “ crop, which is gathered in that country two moons before the vernal
 “ equinox. He could not therefore take a better measure, than to ad-
 “ vance towards this city; because here he was in a situation to traverse
 “ the deserts by the shortest way: besides, he considered that it was
 “ much easier to form magazines in the center of a fruitful province, and
 “ at no great distance from the capital, than on a barren coast. It is
 “ notorious, that he spared neither money, solicitations, nor care, to
 “ gather in those provisions; and that I even sent, at my own expence,
 “ 3000 camels loaded with rice. If we had any design, as our enemies
 “ pretend, to march the army against ISFAHAN, the carrying away such
 “ a prodigious quantity of provisions was an unpopular measure, and
 “ tended to incense the people against us; for they were already irritated
 “ by the burthens laid on them. But it is needless to spend any more
 “ time in justifying a conduct, the rectitude and prudence of which are
 “ evident: it is now time that their happy majesties, who are the shadow
 “ of God upon earth, should determine the cause between innocence
 “ and imposture.”

C H A P. XIII.

*Death and character of the ATHEMAT DOULET. Excursions of the LES-
 GEES. Magnanimity of VACHTANGA; he puts on the turbant, and is
 named VALI of GEORGIA. Preparations made by this prince against
 the LESGEES, whom he reduces to extremity. They are saved from de-
 struction by a court intrigue. VACHTANGA takes an oath never to
 appear in arms in defence of PERSIA.*

FATEY ALI KHAN having thus finished his apology, the king, far
 from being offended with the liberty with which he had delivered
 himself, could not help weeping at the misfortunes occasioned by his
 precipitate judgment. And yet as this disgrace was irreparable, and the
 court imagined they could no longer put any confidence in a man whom
 they

they had used so barbarously; after he had been a victim to malice and credulity, he fell a sacrifice to policy, and was sent a prisoner to the castle of SHIRASS: but SHAH HUSSEIN to soften in some measure the rigour of this sentence, granted him a considerable pension, and endeavoured to comfort him by representing the inevitable necessity of fate^z. The ATHEMAT DOULET died in prison a little after the taking of ISFAHAN^a. It was imagined that he made use of poison, fearing lest MIR MAGHMUD should oblige him to make discoveries prejudicial to the state: but it is more probable that he fell under the weight of his own misfortunes, and those in which his country was now involved, by the evil government of his enemies.

SHAH HUSSEIN thus lost the wisest of his ministers. He had the noblest mien of any person at court; and as he mentioned in his justification, owed to his œconomy and good management, that great fortune of which he was possessed. As to the conspiracy, it was undoubtedly a contrivance of his enemies; but tho' his integrity was untainted in this particular, his reputation was not without blemish. It is beyond dispute, that after MIR VAIS was sent prisoner to ISFAHAN, FATEY ALI KHAN took him under his protection, and sent him back to KANDAHAR. Now, whether he was moved by compassion for that prince, who was a SUNNI as well as himself; or whether he acted from an aversion to GURGHIN KHAN; or lastly, through the temptation of the great presents he received from the prisoner; it was certainly a dangerous step, and sufficient to render his fidelity suspected. Besides, he was already appointed ATHEMAT DOULET, or of the same party as the person who then occupied that post, when KHOSROFF KHAN marched against the AFGHANS; and this cabal was charged with being the cause of the death of that prince, and of the total defeat of the army.

But these are not the only crimes with which some writers have stained the memory of this minister. A missionary, who was at SHAMAKIE at the taking of that city, asserts, that FATEY ALI KHAN, provoked at not having been able to obtain of SHAH HUSSEIN the abolition of the CA-

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RACK,

^z Predestinarianism is a fundamental principle of the MAHOMMEDAN religion.
AFGHANS near two years afterwards.

^a By the

1720. RACK^b, imposed on the SUNNIS, and the custom of uttering maledictions against the three first caliphs, with which the PERSIANS always end their public prayers, formed a project to subvert the government of the SCHIAS, and to ascend the throne himself. Filled with this idea, he saw no nation on whom he could depend so well as on the LESGEES, because he was descended from their ancient kings, and moreover most of their tribes are of this sect. Hence he engaged them to take up arms, and to make incursions into the province of SHIRVAN; not questioning but as a considerable number of the inhabitants professed this same religion, the province would shake off the yoke, and join their forces to those of the rebels.

Be that as it may, SHAH HUSSEIN remained so strongly persuaded of the innocence of this minister, that tho' he had the great weakness to pardon his accusers, yet the conduct he observed towards those who had been confined upon this account, sufficiently evinces that he did not believe him guilty. All of them, without exception, had their estates restored to them; and if some who were possessed of governments had them taken from them, and others were detained at ISFAHAN, this was only thro' fear, lest they should be induced by their resentments to justify the suspicions conceived of them. It is even observed, that tho' the ATHEMAT DOULET's estate was confiscated; yet the several portions were excepted, which belonged to his sons-in-law, MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN, the prince of KAKET^c, and to the KOULLAR AGASSI^d, brother of the VALI of GEORGIA, as their wives portion. True it is, that as the fidelity of these lords was well known, they were not included in the number of those whom the court was to have an eye over; and LUTF ALI KHAN, who had been considered as one of the chiefs of the pretended conspiracy, and as such had been removed to TÄHIRAN, underwent no other punishment than that of restoring to the king the plunder he had taken upon the frontier,

^b A poll-tax paid in MAHOMMEDAN countries by subjects who are of a different religion from that of the prince.

^c KAKET, a province, the government of which is sometimes joined to that of KARABAGH, and sometimes to that of GEORGIA. It has also had its general governors; from whence they have derived the name of prince.

^d The chief of the slaves: a body of cavalry, composed of men of distinction, who stile themselves the king's slaves.

frontier, and of being watched at ISFAHAN, not as a state-criminal, but 1720. as a man who had just cause to be disaffected to the government.

This storm was at length succeeded by some days of calm. The LES-GEES, whose incursions had given great uneasiness to the court, sent deputies to ISFAHAN to sue for a reconciliation. The anxiety with which this revolt had filled the minds of SHAH HUSSEIN and his ministers, was well founded: for those people having driven away the collectors and other officers belonging to the king, assembled towards the beginning of 1719 to the number of two thousand men; and, commanded by MULLA ABDALLAH, and KANLU SABAN, their chiefs, they made incursions, and spread terror and desolation in some of the neighbouring parts of GEORGIA. Their reputation and forces having increased by their success, they were joined by a body of near 30,000 of the inhabitants of SHIRVAN, who were of the sect of the SUNNIS, and pushed their hostilities to the gates of GANJA and SHAMAKIE. At length the khan, who commanded in the latter, having received orders to oppose these hostilities, marched at the head of forty thousand men against the rebels, who were then incamped in a plain between GANJA and the borders of SHIRVAN. But just when he was preparing to attack them, they surprized him in the night, so that part of his army was cut to pieces, and the remainder dispersed. The khan^e himself perished on this occasion, with most of his principal officers.

The fear of the resentment of a power over whom they had obtained so signal a triumph, was not the motive which induced these people to sue for peace. They were determined to take this step by a more pressing consideration; which I shall explain by tracing matters somewhat higher.

After KHOSROFF KHAN was slain before KANDAHAR, VACHTANGA, as the eldest of the family, ought in course to have succeeded him in the dignity of VALI of GEORGIA; but as he refused to wear the turban^f, his younger brother, tho' the patriarch of that country, offered himself in

^e This being the first battle of any consequence that was fought between the PERSIANS and LES-GEES in HUSSEIN's reign, renders it probable, that this khan was the nephew of FATEY ALI KHAN mentioned in his vindication, page 78.

^f This is sometimes used as an expression to denote the MAHOMMEDAN religion; tho' the ARMENIANS, who are christians, wear turbans in PERSIA.

1720. in his stead. Their father, then DIVAN BEGHI of ISFAHAN, tho' a MAHOMMEDAN himself, was so incensed at this scandalous proposal, that he ordered this irreligious priest to be bastinadoed, and kept to his sacerdotal function. The investiture of this principality was then given to the third son, who being less scrupulous than the eldest, and somewhat less culpable than the second, embraced the MAHOMMEDAN religion.

VACHTANGA, tho' banished to KHERMAN, persevered in his glorious resolution many years; but at length the solicitations of the court, joined to the irksomeness of his exile, overcame his constancy: he renounced, or more probably pretended that he renounced, christianity, and in consequence thereof was named VALI of GEORGIA. This new prince repaired to TEFFLIS in 1719: he was scarce arrived there, when beholding with sorrow and indignation, the devastations which the LESGEES had committed in his territories, he determined to revenge the cause of his people in such a manner, as should secure them for ages against their dangerous neighbours. Having obtained the consent of the nobility, who were convened upon this account, he ordered every GEORGIAN that was able to bear arms, to join him in that capital; he also made every other preparation that was necessary, and the ensuing spring would have been ready to take the field at the head of 60,000 men.

The LESGEES saw into his design, and concluded they were undone: their only resource was to implore the clemency of SHAH HUSSEIN, and to persuade this prince to interpose his authority in their favour. Such was the motive of the deputation they now sent: but the GEORGIANS were in arms, when the king's first MULLAH, and the physician^b, invoked their infernal genius to conjure up another storm. These treacherous courtiers, reflecting that a son-in-law of the ATHEMAT DOULET, who lately fell a sacrifice to their impostures, was brother to this prince; were afraid lest after having defeated the LESGEES, he might attempt to make use of so fine an army, to oblige the court to punish them for their iniquitous conduct. They availed themselves therefore of the ascendant they had gained over their weak and deluded sovereign, and represented that VACHTANGA, after defeating

^b HAKEM BASHI.

defeating his enemies, might occasion great troubles in PERSIA, especially 1720. as it would then be very easy for him to receive considerable succours from RUSSIA by sea: therefore the only way to prevent these misfortunes, would be to grant a peace to the LESGEES, and order the VALI to cease all hostilities, which would oblige this prince to disband his troops, and remove all apprehension of danger from his ambition; moreover, that this measure would prevent the depopulation of a province, which the vicinity of the sea rendered very considerable, without exposing PERSIA to any future invasions from those people; for the dread of being delivered up to the resentment of the GEORGIANS, would necessarily contain them within the bounds of their duty.

SHAH HUSSEIN, persuaded by this artful discourse, made no difficulty to grant a peace to the rebels. And without keeping any measures with the VALI of GEORGIA, he forbid him in the most imperious and haughty manner to give them any further disturbance. His orders were: "If you have got your foot in the stirrup, alight immediately. If you have drawn your sabre, put it directly into the scabbard; and if you are in pursuit of the LESGEES, stop the moment you receive our commands; in a word, take the utmost care not to infringe the peace which they have obtained from the clemency of him whom the universe obeys."

VACHTANGA was already in full march, and upon the point of crushing his enemies, when he received these strict and unwelcome orders. It is generally believed that the only motive which induced him to stop his pursuit, and obey the imprudent orders of the PERSIAN court, arose from an apprehension lest the chiefs of the nation should desert him, as they had formerly deserted GURGHIN KHAN. Be that as it may, he declared he would obey, but it was in terms that clearly demonstrated the height of his resentment. After ordering the courier into his presence, he drew his sabre, and swore he would never fight again in the service of the king, nor in the defence of PERSIA. He then disbanded his troops, and withdrew to TEFFLIS, fully determined to observe his oath inviolate.

PART IV.
THE
REVOLUTIONS OF PERSIA,

FROM THE
COMMENCEMENT OF THE YEAR 1721,

TO THE
BATTLE OF GULNABAD IN 1722.

CHAP. XIV.

Pacific dispositions of the AFGHANS. Uneasiness given to the court of ISFAHAN by the arrival of the TURKISH ambassador. HUSSEIN sends an ambassador to the grand signior; and frightened by various presages, returns to ISFAHAN. The LESGEES lay siege to SHAMAKIE, take it, and commit great cruelties; they make themselves masters of the rest of SHIRVAN, beat the KHAN of ERIVAN, and lay siege to GANJA. The court in great consternation.

1721.

AT the commencement of this year, things seemed to promise tranquillity. The ready submission of the VALI of GEORGIA, and the pacification of DAGISTAN, put an end to the anxiety which had been created by the formidable army of that prince, and by the excursions of the LESGEES. Advice was also come, that the rebels of KANDAHAR, intimidated by their defeat, were ready to enter into an accommodation: and the peace and restitution of the isle of BAHARAIN, which were negotiated by the king's orders, and actually concluded in

the course of this year, by means of eight thousand tomansⁱ, gave room to hope, that the monarchy thus delivered from its principal enemies, might subdue the rest, whom fear and example would hereafter contain within proper bounds. 1721.

But there was one circumstance which still disturbed the court. They had heard by letters from HASSAN BASHA, the governor of BAGDAT, that an embassador from the OTTOMAN port was ready to set out for TÆHIRAN: and as it was well known that the grand vizir^k, ALI BACHA^l, designed to declare war against PERSIA, when he was killed at the battle of PETERWARADIN^m; they had reason to apprehend, lest his successor should inspire the grand signior with the same sentiments, especially at a time when the peace of PASSAROWITZ, and the intestine commotions of that kingdom, afforded a favourable opportunity for such an undertaking.

Under these circumstances, the timorous court of HUSSEIN concluded that this minister was come to demand the cession of some province, and to declare war in case of a refusal. And tho' the king had already resolved to send an embassador to CONSTANTINOPLE, in order to sound the disposition of the port; and, if there should be occasion, to purchase the continuation of the peace, by offering to yield some extent of territory towards ERIVAN or KERKOUDE; yet the uncertainty he was under, whether the TURKS would be contented with these terms, occasioned great uneasiness.

As the king could not avoid giving audience to this minister, the governors of the places through which he was to pass, had orders to receive him with all the honours and respect due to his character. He came by KERMANSHA, HAMADAN, DERGHESIN, and CASBIN to TÆHIRAN, where he arrived towards the beginning of JANUARY 1721, two months after his departure from the frontier, and the disgrace of the ATHEMAT DOULET.

The

ⁱ 20,000 l.

^k Vazir or vizir, in the ARABIAN tongue signifies a porter. In TURKEY this title is given to the counsellors of state; and that of vizir-azem, or grand vizir, is first minister.

^l This minister was remarkable for his integrity; but he was severe, and hated the christians, whom he considered as the natural enemies of his master.

^m A strong town of SCLAVONIA on the DANUBE, subject to the house of AUSTRIA.

1721. The embassador, whose name was DOURI EFFENDIⁿ, has given the following relation himself of the ceremony of his being admitted to audience. “ In this order I went to the palace of TCHARBAG, where having
 “ alighted from my horse at the third gate, I entered the audience cham-
 “ ber. The SHAH was seated opposite the door: at his right and left
 “ were a great number of officers^o: there were also thirty PERSIANS^p
 “ magnificently armed, and about ten ministers or great officers of the
 “ kingdom; the latter were seated. I passed through the midst of them
 “ with a stately gait; I wore a stiff turbant on my head, a gown lined
 “ with fable on my shoulders, and held the imperial letter as high as my
 “ head. I walked on very gently till I came near the sofa, on which
 “ the SHAH was seated; and when I was within two steps of him, I
 “ raised the imperial letter with my right hand; and with my left, I sa-
 “ luted him in the manner sovereigns are saluted^q, and I spoke to him
 “ thus:”

“ May health reside with thee^r: God preserve me from the SCHEI-
 “ THAN^s ALRAGIM. In the name of the most merciful God, this pre-
 “ sent writing tells thee the truth^t. Behold the most happy and most
 “ magnificent imperial letter of their majesties, the most magnificent, the
 “ most formidable, the most majestic, the most potent SULTAN ACHMED,
 “ KHAN GAZI^u; may God give glory to those who assist him; sovereign
 “ of the two continents, emperor of the two seas^w; who is a second
 “ ALEXANDER ZUL KARNEIN^x; servant of the holy ORIENTAL cities^y;
 “ sultan,

ⁿ Signifies skill'd in law. ^o Beglerbegs and khans. ^p Of those who are called KUZZLEBASH, which signifies red heads; so called from the crimson caps worn when they were first formed into a body under this name, by SHEICH HEYDR, father of ISMAEL I. of the SEFFIE dynasty. They have been sometimes considered as the janizaries, *i. e.* ingecherris among the TURKS, though this distinction is in a great measure lost, for the soldiers in general wear crimson caps; but the corps of every different nation are kept distinct. ^q I presume he took the hem of his garment and kissed it. ^r The

TURKS generally begin all their recitals and writings with an invocation. ^s SCHEITHAN or SATHAN, with us satan; whom the MAHOMMEDANS believe to have been cursed for having resisted the will of God, when he was commanded to prostrate himself before ADAM. RAGIM, according to some commentators, signifies deprived of grace. ^t A passage of the khoran. ^u This

surname is given to those MAHOMMEDAN princes, who have made conquests over the enemies of their religion. ^w The BLACK SEA, and the ARCHIPELAGO. ^x With two horns,

that is, whose empire embraces the east and west, named by the eastern people the horns of the world.

^y MECCA and MEDINA.

“ sultan, son of sultan. He wishes all health to the most fortunate pre- 1721.
 “ fence of their majesties, the SHAH GEMJA^a, whose crown glitters like
 “ the sun, and desires to be informed of his precious health.

“ I made him this compliment in the tone in which we sing the EZAN^a,
 “ throwing my words into a cadence. The prime minister^b, who was
 “ during this time on my right hand^c, attempted twice to take the im-
 “ perial letter from me; but I took no notice of him. The SHAH him-
 “ self stretched out his hand with the same intent; but your slave^d cast
 “ his eyes on no sort of object till he had finished his harangue. Then
 “ I kissed the imperial letter; and raising it twice to my head, I pre-
 “ sented it to the SHAH, who had already thrice offered to take it. He
 “ raised himself on his knees to receive it; and having kissed it, he made
 “ a sign to the chief of his eunuchs^e, who came for it, kissed it, raised
 “ it twice to his head, and then held it in his hands. The SHAH or-
 “ dered me at the same time to sit down; but your slave out of respect
 “ refused it. He commanded me a second time; and as I continued to
 “ refuse it, the chief master of the ceremonies^f took me hold by the
 “ arms, and forced me to sit down^g.”

The king asked the ambassador many questions; and after they had
 dined in the same hall according to custom, he took his leave of the
 king, and retired. The 10th of MARCH^h SHAH HUSSEIN gave audience
 for the third and last time to this ambassador: on which occasion a mi-
 nister from RUSSIA, two envoys from the OUSBEGS, and ninety-four de-
 puties of the LESGEES were introduced. The latter were come to de-
 mand, each in the name of his particular tribe, the ordinary subsidies,

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the

^a As great and as potent as GEM OR GIAMSCHID, an antient king of PERSIA. ^a The
 EZAN is what they cry five times with a loud voice from their turrets, to give the people notice that
 it is the hour of prayer. ^b ATHEMAT DOULET. ^c GIAMSCHID, the antient king

of PERSIA just mentioned, gave the preference to the left; though in general the right is esteemed in
 the east, as with us in EUROPE. ^d This description was given to the grand signior. ^e The
 KISLAR AGA. ^f The ESIK AGASI BASHI, chief master of the ceremonies, whose office it is

to hold the ambassadors by the arm, while they pay their respects to the king. ^g From this ex-
 tract we may form an idea of the formal manner of a TURKISH writer, as well as of the ceremonies
 of a TURKISH ambassador at a PERSIAN COURT. ^h Vernal equinox, or PERSIAN new-
 years-day.

1721. the payment of which had been settled by the late peace. The king being pre-possessed with an opinion that the TURKS intended to take an advantage of the divisions which had rent the kingdom, was agreeably surprized when the embassador of the port assured him, that his master was fully determined to observe the peace. The beginning of APRIL the TURKISH embassador set out on his return for CONSTANTINOPLE. MORTAZA KOULI KHAN, appointed embassador to that court, was also preparing to take the same rout, with a more explicit answer than that which the king had given to the TURKISH minister.

In the interim, the court received fresh alarms from the eastern parts of the empire: the governor of MESCHEDⁱ acquainted the court by a letter, that the ABDOLLEES of HERAT had made great incursions; observing, that if speedy measures were not taken to protect the city and its dependencies against the rebels, they must soon be obliged to submit. This intelligence was soon followed by news of a more dreadful nature: the 26th of the same month, TAVRIS, the second city of the kingdom, and capital of the province of ADERBEITZAN, was destroyed by an earthquake, in which very near a hundred thousand of the inhabitants perished^k.

Under these melancholy circumstances, SHAH HUSSEIN prepared to take his leave of TÆHIRAN, and return to ISFAHAN, where he arrived with his whole court the first of JUNE. Towards the end of this month, the consternation of the people was increased by a phænomenon, which might be considered as such in that climate. They were ten days without seeing the sun; during that time it is said the horizon was covered with a reddish cloud, with but little more light than when the sun is totally eclipsed^l. The astrologers pretended that all these signs presaged great calamities to ISFAHAN; and the king having questioned them concerning the nature of these calamities, some of them predicted an earthquake like to that which had lately destroyed the city of TAVRIS; others, that fire would fall from heaven and cause a general conflagration; but not one of them had sense enough to see, or not honesty and courage enough to tell this.

ⁱ Capital of KHORASAN.

^k The same fate happened in 1657.

^l This circumstance, tho' seriously attested, the reader is at his liberty to believe: when mens minds are distempered with fear, they easily imagine they see spectres.

this monarch, that his effeminacy and weakness had rendered him contemptible; and that his own subjects, no longer restrained by fear, would be themselves the cause of all the misfortunes with which he was menaced. The king, as a further mark of his imbecillity, frightened at these predictions, quitted his palace, and went to lodge in tents: part of the court and of the inhabitants having followed the example of the prince, the gardens and public squares were filled with people.

Things were in this situation, when a new disgrace seemed already in some degree to verify the prediction. The LESGEES, restless and unmindful of their great obligations to HUSSEIN, remembered only the oath of VACHTANGA the VALI of GEORGIA; and being informed moreover that from a strong persuasion of their not daring to break a peace, which had been granted as so high a favour, the neighbouring provinces were bare of troops, they were emboldened by these circumstances, joined to that of SHAH HUSSEIN's removal to TÄHIRAN, to make an irruption into SHIRVAN, under the command of SULTAN IBRAHIM, and DAOUD BEG their chiefs.

The pretext with which they covered this revolt, was the disgrace of FATEY ALI KHAN, who had been condemned, they said, only because he was descended from their antient sovereigns. They soon made themselves masters of the flat country: but their aim was above destroying defenceless peasants, and plundering villages. The riches of SHAMAKIE, the capital of the province, equally excited the ambition and the avarice of their generals; and tho' their army, which consisted only of 15,000 men, did not seem strong enough for the execution of such a project, yet they appeared the 15th of AUGUST before that city, in hopes that they should be favoured in their enterprize by the SUNNIS, who were the most numerous part of the inhabitants. This conjecture was justified by the event. The governor, HUSSEIN KHAN, knowing how little he had to depend on the fidelity of the inhabitants, made no folly, lest he should be deserted by the people that followed him, or betrayed by those who staid behind in the town; so that he determined to make as good a defence as he could within the walls. This resolution, which was the only one he could take, enabled him to withstand the attacks of the enemy

1721. for the space of 25 days; and perhaps the length of the siege would have tired out the LESGEES, if the SUNNIS, who kept a correspondence with the enemy, had not found means, in spite of all the vigilance of the governor, to open one of the gates to them. The besiegers rushed in immediately, making hideous shouts; but altho' the garrison was surprized, they were not beaten. All the LESGEES could compass that day, was to force their way to the SUNNIS quarter, where they entrenched themselves. Early the next morning they marched out in good order, intending to complete the conquest of the city. The governor made some stand against them; but perceiving that he was deserted or betrayed by his people, he determined at length to provide for his own safety. His loyalty and courage had prevented his taking this resolution in time; for the enemy having detached some cavalry after him, they soon came up with him, and brought him back to the town.

The situation of SHAMAKIE rendered it a staple between the RUSSIANS and PERSIANS^m; but the great plunder of it did not satisfy the avarice of the LESGEES: their generals were hurried by this base passion, to commit the most barbarous cruelties against HUSSEIN KHAN. They put him to the acutest tortures, imagining he had buried his treasure; but whether it was that this nobleman had not concealed any, or indifferent about his life he did not regard their fury, he made no discovery; for which reason they cut him in pieces, together with his nephew, and another of his relations, and flung their bodies to the dogs.

About 4000 inhabitants were put to the sword; and this massacre would have been greater, if many had not saved themselves the night on which the enemy entrenched themselves in the quarters of the SUNNIS: for we must likewise observe, that the LESGEES put none to the sword of that sect. They also spared the wives and children of the SCHIAS, not through any motive of compassion, but because, according to their law, the right of conquest had made them their slaves. The SUNNIS and the SCHIAS were not the only inhabitants of that city. There was likewise a considerable number

^m I have already remarked in Vol. I. the great loss sustained by YEURIINOFF, a RUSSIAN merchant.

number of ARMENIANS, JEWS, INDIAN idolaters, and several RUSSIAN 1721. merchants; and tho' the conquerors granted no quarter to the SCHIAS, whom they did not make slaves, yet they spared the lives and liberty of these different nations, considering them as strangers; thus a sense of justice hindered them from confounding them with their enemies. But this is to be understood only in regard to their property: for they stripped their habitations of every thing that was valuable. The RUSSIANS lost a great value^a, which contributed to create new enemies against PERSIA, as we shall see hereafter.

So many misfortunes, upon the back of each other, completed the consternation of the divan. SHAH HUSSEIN, who had neither resolution enough to bear such a reverse of fortune, nor abilities sufficient to prevent any further ill consequences, was the first whom the weight of the burthen overcame. Being convinced that heaven had declared against him, he thought no longer of struggling with his misfortunes, but bent his whole attention to appease the divine wrath. All public diversions were forbidden; harlots were expelled the town; fastings and public prayers were ordained; and the ministers of religion appeared in the public squares and market-places, exhorting the people to avert, by a sincere repentance, the calamities impending over their heads. This conduct, if it was pious, was not politic, for it rendered the consternation general; the people in every part of the town being heard to say in a mournful voice, "CHEIK OGLOU^o has finished his career; the fatal period of his government is come; his tottering throne is going to crush us under its ruins."

In the mean time the LESGEES, who had made themselves masters of SHAMAKIE, took possession of the rest of SHIRVAN; after which, knowing that the khan of ERIVAN had orders to throw himself into GANJA, they passed the KURA, and marched forward to meet him. Tho' this general was at the head of 40,000 men, yet he only contributed to increase the triumph of the rebels. Part of his army was cut to pieces in different engagements; the remainder fled towards ERIVAN: the LESGEES having

^a About 100,000 *l*. ^o The king, who is the son of CHEIK, a name given to the kings of PERSIA of the SEFFIE dynasty, because they were descended from CHEIK SEFFIE.

1721. having made themselves masters of his camp and equipage, besieged him in GANJA, whether he had retired after his defeat.

C H A P. XV.

MIR MAGHMUD *raises an army of 15,000 men. He marches towards KHERMAN, and makes himself master of that city; from thence he proceeds to YEZD, and lays siege to it, but is obliged to retire. He leads his army through deserts towards ISFAHAN, and arrives at GULNABAD. The PERSIANS prepare to oppose him. Different opinions in the divan upon that subject.*

PERSIA thus saw herself threatened with a storm from all sides, when MIR MAGHMUD, the most formidable of her enemies, disclosed his ambitious designs. The AFGHANS disheartened by the defeat they had met with before KHERMAN, considered themselves as utterly undone, when they heard that LUTF ALI KHAN was making preparations for the siege of KANDAHAR. The prudence and valour of this general; the number and discipline of his troops; and the quantity of ammunition and provisions with which his magazines were filled, made them conclude that their ruin was inevitable. In this situation, the whole nation seemed desirous of a peace, and waited only for the approach of the enemy to sue for it. But they no sooner were informed of the imprisonment of LUTF ALI KHAN, and the disbanding of his army, than security and joy succeeded their fear. MIR MAGHMUD, whose authority had been in some measure destroyed by these melancholy circumstances, insensibly resumed the command of his people.

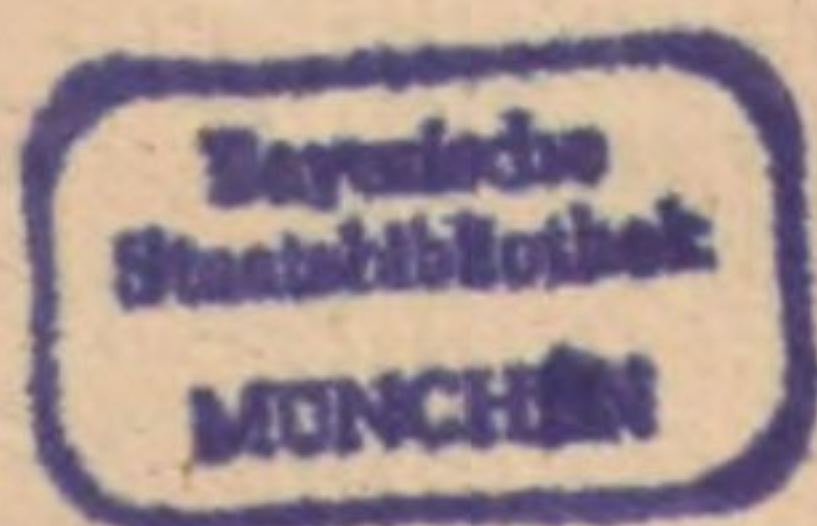
The first use which MAGHMUD made of this change, was to put himself in a condition of making a vigorous resistance, in case the PERSIANS should determine to pursue their design. With this intent, he omitted nothing that might contribute to the security of the province; he raised troops, ordered arms to be made, and filled the magazines with every thing necessary to hold out a long siege. These preparations were just com-

completed at KANDAHAR, when they heard of the extremity to which the city of MESCHED was reduced. The news of the destruction of TAVRIS, and of the irruption of the LESGEES, followed soon after; and these different events eased the minds of the people, and gave their chief an opportunity of forming new resolutions. 1721.

MAGHMUD's apprehensions being thus removed, he began to think of becoming formidable in his turn: the hopes of conquests, which his last defeat seemed to have stifled, now crowded again upon his imagination. To dispose the AFGHANS to enter into his views, he reminded them of the several circumstances that ought to dissipate every thought of danger: he observed to them, that the provinces of KANDAHAR, HERAT, SA-ELESTAN, MECRAN, and DAGISTAN, had shaken off the yoke; that SEGESTAN, KHERMAN, and the greatest part of the vast country of KHO-RASAN had been ravaged, and SHIRVAN invaded; that the dispersion of the army which was under LUTF ALI KHAN, and the oath of the VALI of GEORGIA, rendered PERSIA entirely defenceless. He put them in mind of the advantages which he had obtained over this nation, at a time when her power was really great; and relating the success of the KOURDS, the OUSBEGS, and the MASCATS, he made the AFGHANS believe, that the throne was ready to fall a prey to the first who would venture to seize on it.

Such discourses as these, accompanied with several marks of his liberality, could not but make an impression on the minds of a people, who were naturally inclined to war. Hence they talked of nothing but conquests; and the hopes of booty engaged 15,000 AFGHANS to lift themselves under the banners of their chief. But MAGHMUD being sensible that these forces were not answerable to the greatness of his design, applied himself to the means of increasing them.

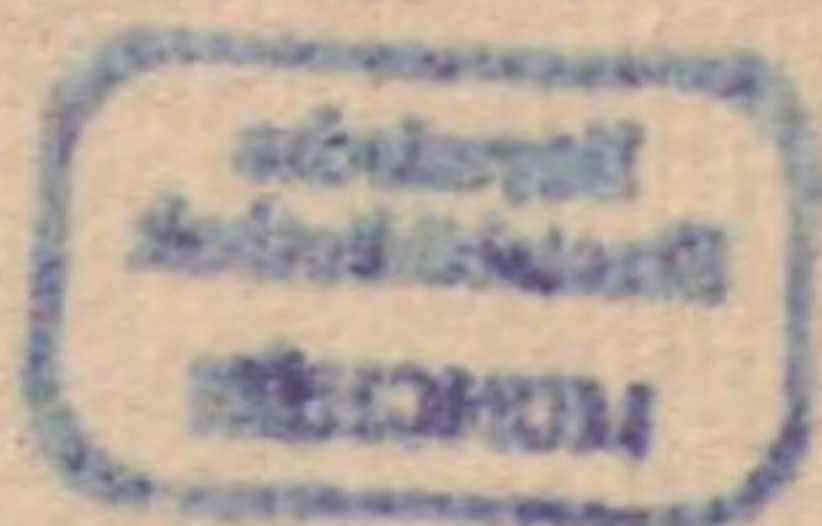
For this purpose he had no occasion for long negotiations: the restless and turbulent spirit of the neighbouring nations soon determined them in his favour. At the first news of an intended expedition into PERSIA, the ABDOLLEES, BALOUCHES, the inhabitants of CABUL, and the neighbouring country flocked to him; and in a very short time his army was greatly augmented.



1721. augmented by these adventurers of several countries and religions. But among the different chiefs who joined him, AMAN OLA brought him the most considerable reinforcement. This captain, whom some have imagined to be a prince of CABUL, was originally only a simple dervise, but chusing a military life, was now at the head of a considerable body of troops, and joined MAGHMUD rather as an ally than as a subject: embarking in this enterprize, upon condition of making an equal division of the fruits of their conquests. The union of their forces did not constitute an army of above 25,000 fighting men: they took with them a few elephants for burthen, with a considerable number of camels; these with their drivers, the servants of the soldiers, and the domestics of the chiefs, made this army appear much more formidable than it really was. MAGHMUD never had so many troops under his command before. They were scarce assembled, when this young chief full of ardour and hopes, began to carry his enterprize into execution. He entrusted the regency of KANDAHAR to his brother; after which he crossed the deserts of SEGESTAN with the same precaution and fatigue as he had done the preceding year;
1722. and entering KHERMAN towards the beginning of JANUARY this year, he sat down before the capital of that province.

This city did not make any long resistance. The PERSEES^P, and the INDIANS, who were settled there, having refused to fight against an army which consisted partly of troops of their own nation, soon obliged the remainder of the inhabitants, who in other respects were not prepared for a siege, to open the gates to the enemy. When MAGHMUD was master of the town, his next point was to take the citadel. He tried several times to carry it by assault; for as he had no cannon fit for a siege, this seemed the only way he could take it: but he met with such a warm and gallant reception from the garrison, which had been left there by LUTF ALI KHAN, that he soon began to despair of success. Being thus provoked at a resistance which he did not expect, he knew not what measures to take. He was sensible of the consequences of his undertaking: he

^P The PERSEES are the descendants of the antient PERSIANS, who worshipped fire, and have preserved their religion. These people are best known in the east, and even among us, by the name of GAUR or GEBER, which in the PERSIAN language signifies an infidel or an idolater.



he could not raise the siege without losing his reputation, by acknowledging himself defeated, at the very commencement of the campaign. Besides, how could he pretend, after miscarrying before so inconsiderable a place, to attack the capital of a vast empire? But it was yet a greater difficulty by what means to take a citadel strongly fortified, and provided with a numerous garrison. Some of the bravest of his men had thrown away their lives to no purpose; and several others, discouraged by the repulse, had already deserted him, and set out on their return to KANDAHAR; so that if he persisted in his design, it seemed to threaten the total dispersion of his army. 1722.

His mind was occupied with these reflections, when the governor, frightened at such vigorous attacks, or apprehensive of the want of provisions, offered to treat with the besiegers. He required that the army should raise the siege; and on his side he would pay, as an indemnity or ransom, 2500 tomans^a. Tho' the tendency of this extraordinary capitulation was to preserve, and not to surrender the place, yet the present circumstances were such, that the proposals were received with joy. As soon as the money was paid, the hostilities, which had been already suspended, intirely ceased.

Fortune having thus favoured MAGHMUD, he now thought of pursuing his first design. He had lost 4000 men in crossing the desert, and at the siege; but the present conjuncture gave him a fair occasion of reinforcing his army. Many of the inhabitants of KHERMAN are PERSEES, who, from the remembrance of their past grandeur, being enemies of the reigning nation, were naturally inclined to espouse the cause of a prince, whom they considered as the scourge of their tyrants.

A few days after the capitulation, MAGHMUD marched at the head of his army towards the north, taking the road to YEZD. This city is situate about seventy leagues from KHERMAN: the country between is very sandy, and has only a few inconsiderable villages, at a great distance from each other. This circumstance shews, that this prince's view was not to enrich himself with the spoils of the open country, in the fruitful plains of

1722. FARST: his thoughts were engaged upon another object; and he avoided every thing that might retard the execution of his design. He knew very well that he should not meet on this road with any fortrefs that might stop him, or with towns where his troops might be incumbered with pillage. It was with this very intent he preferred the road through the deserts, upon his first setting out, instead of taking the ordinary rout, which was much shorter and easier.

As soon as he arrived before YEZD, he attempted to take the town by assault, attacking it with all his troops on every side; but he was on every side repulsed with loss. Being grown more circumspect by his mistakes, he resolved not to persist in the siege, the consequence of which must be extremely dangerous. He therefore continued his march; and after having proceeded with all possible expedition through the plains^s, which separate the city of PAHANAVENS from that of BIBEN, at length he entered the cultivated country. The people, terrified at his approach, deserted the villages and towns that lay in his way; so that nothing retarded the rapidity of his march. At length, having dispersed some troops that seemed to have been sent rather to reconnoitre than to fight, he arrived within four days march of ISFAHAN; when two officers, who were deputed by the court, were conducted into his presence.

MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN, then prime minister^t, not knowing how to avert so sudden a storm, had sent these officers to treat with him: accordingly they opened their commission, which was to offer him a sum of 15,000 tomansⁿ, on condition that he would not proceed any farther, and that his troops should commit no devastation in the territory of ISFAHAN. MAGHMUD judged from hence of the weakness and terror of the enemy, and dismissing the deputies without making any answer, advanced with his usual diligence, and pitched his camp at GULNABAD^w.

It is far easier to imagine, than to describe the terror with which the king and his ministers were seized, when they heard that MAGHMUD was marching

^r FARISTAN OF PERSIA properly so called.

^s This country abounds in nitre.

^t ATHEMAT DOULET.

ⁿ 37,500 l.

^w Signifies conserve of roses. This village is

three leagues from ISFAHAN.

marching directly to ISFAHAN. They had lull'd themselves into security, 1722. from a persuasion that this prince would not leave behind him unconquered so vast a tract of country; and little thought that he would open the campaign in the very center of the empire; consequently they had not made the necessary preparations to oppose him. Hence there was neither ammunition nor provisions in ISFAHAN; and as the celerity of the march of the rebels, had not afforded time to collect the different bodies of troops, that were dispersed on the frontiers, they were absolutely at a loss how to stem the torrent. However, as something must be done, they collected the few troops that were at hand; to these they joined the militia, that was raised in a hurry in the city and the neighbourhood; and all the lords of the court, excepting those whose profession was inconsistent with arms, being ready to mount on horse-back, the army waited only the king's orders.

As this monarch was incapable of forming any resolution himself, he waited with impatience to hear what the divan would determine. In time of distress, when a union of counsels is most necessary, the pusillanimity of some, and the wickedness of others, generally create perplexity. The council was divided in opinion: the prime minister gave his advice not to hazard a general action, but to intrench their army, and cover the town. "By this means," said he, "our new troops will be insensibly accustom'd to see the enemy; a few skirmishes will rouse a martial spirit by degrees; if the rebels attempt to force our lines, we shall fight them to an advantage; if this measure should oblige them to continue in their camp, it will be an easy thing to starve them, by cutting off their provisions: thus the issue of the war will be protracted, and the troops dispersed in the provinces will have time to join us, and cut off the retreat of the rebels."

This was the opinion of the ATHEMAT DOULET. On the contrary, ABDALLAH KHAN, VALI of ARABIA, now at ISFAHAN, maintained, "that it was beneath the majesty of the empire to temporize with rebels and slaves; that the grandeur of the king, and the honour of the nation, were concerned to chastise their insolence. Why," said he, "should
2 " the

1722. " the frontiers be exposed to new invasions? The king's troops are incensed; they long for battle; the best way therefore is to make use of this first ardour of the soldiers, and to crush an infatuated youth, who by the victory of LUTFALI KHAN, and his miscarriages at KHERMAN and YEZD, ought to have learnt the difference between soldiers and robbers."

The ATHEMAT DOULET's advice was certainly the most prudent and safe; but that of the ARABIAN prince suited most with the pride and revenge with which the divan was animated. PERSIA devoted to ruin, had hardly a single advocate devoid of passion, and whose mind was free from prejudice or treachery: the latter opinion was preferred by the plurality of suffrages, and as soon as they heard that the AFGHANS were arrived at GULNABAD, the army received orders to march and fight them. MAGHMUD was not surprized at this determination; for he never dreamt that the king would submit to see his capital besieged, without trying the issue of a battle; and therefore as he knew neither the number nor valour of his enemies, he intrenched himself in his camp.

CH A P. XVI.

The PERSIAN army marches to fight the AFGHANS. The day of battle is fixed by the astrologers. Order of battle, and disposition of both armies. The singular conduct of the two princesses of LORISTAN. Particular account of the battle of GULNABAD. Cause of the success of the AFGHANS. Reflexion on the conduct of the VALI of ARABIA.

THE seventh of MARCH the PERSIAN army appeared within sight of the enemy's intrenchments; but SHAH HUSSEIN having, by the advice of his astrologers, fixed the eighth of that month for the engagement, there passed only some light skirmishes the first day. It was given out in the PERSIAN camp, that MAGHMUD, surprized at the number and beauty of the king's troops, proposed to make his escape with a thousand of his best horse. The PERSIAN generals spread these reports in order to encourage

encourage their soldiers; for they could not really think, that this prince intended to sacrifice, by an ignominious flight, his subjects and allies to the fury of an enemy, in search of whom he had made so long and so extraordinary a march. 1722.

SUNDAY the eighth of MARCH, according to the vain prognostics of the astrologers, was to deliver the PERSIAN monarchy. The generals began early in the morning to range their troops in order of battle. On the side of the PERSIANS; the center, which seemed to be designed only for a body of reserve, was given to CHEIK ALI KHAN, general of horse. He had under him several khans with their troops, 4000 of the king's horse, and the same number of his foot guards; the latter being armed with musquets and sabres: these were covered at some distance by a battery of 24 pieces of cannon, defended, and served by 2000 cannoneers, under the command of MAHOMMED KHAN, grand master of the artillery^z.

The right wing was formed of 2000 of those horsemen who are called the king's slaves^y, some of whom are armed with bows and arrows, and others with fusils and pistols; there were likewise some khans, and several other lords with their attendants. This wing was under the command of ROSTAM KHAN, the KOULAR AGASSI^z, brother of VACHTANGA, VALI of GEORGIA. The VALI of ARABIA, who shared the general command of the army with the ATHEMAT DOULET, had strengthened this wing with a body of 3000 cavalry of his own nation, at the head of whom he intended to fight.

The ATHEMAT DOULET commanded in the left wing, which was composed of the king's household; the lords belonging to the court, and the rest of the nobility. ALI MERDAN KHAN^a, VALI of LORISTAN^b, joined them in person with 500 horse. Such was the order of battle in the king's army. They had, besides the forces above-mentioned, 18,000 infantry

^x TOPCHI BACHI. ^y KULAMS. ^z General of the slaves. ^a It is affirmed that two daughters of this prince attended him in his former expeditions against the TURKS in mens habits, and now fought by his side. ^b The province of LORISTAN is a mountainous country, that formerly depended on CHUSISTAN, or the antient SUSIANA; but having been peopled by colonies of the KOURDS, it was afterwards comprized in KOURDISTAN. BERONGIERD, a place situate near HAMADAN, is its principal fortress. We must take care not to confound this place with LARISTAN, which is on the sea coast.

1722. fantry of militia, raised upon this occasion in the neighbourhood of the city, who were armed with musquets. The different troops formed all together a body of near 50,000 fighting men.

There is no agreement in the accounts of those who were at ISFAHAN during the siege, in regard to the number of soldiers in MAGHMUD's army: the most probable opinion is, that it was not above half the number of the king's troops. It consisted chiefly of cavalry; these were armed with a sabre and lance, which those people handle with equal dexterity: their defensive armour are a buckler and cuirass, made of a double fold of hard leather, and many of them carry pistols. Their whole army was divided into four unequal parts: the most numerous formed the right wing under the command of AMAN OLA. MAGHMUD was in the second division, which he placed in the center: he gave the command of the third to NASR ULLAH, a PERSEE, whom he had made one of his lieutenant-generals: and the fourth, and least numerous of these bodies, were choice men of the PEHLEVANS or NÆSSAKHCHI^c. The length and celerity of MAGHMUD's march, as we have observed, did not permit him to bring any cannon with him; but he supplied this defect in some measure by a very extraordinary artillery: these are a kind of harquebuses, which carry a handful of musquet balls; each of these pieces, with its stock, was mounted on a camel, which lay down at command; and from the backs of these animals, trained to this exercise, they charged and fired these arms^d.

The sun had just appeared on the horizon, when the armies began to observe each other with that curiosity, so natural on these dreadful occasions. The PERSIAN army just come out of the capital, being composed of whatever was most brilliant at court, seemed as if it had been formed rather to make a shew than to fight. The riches and variety of their arms and vestments; the beauty of their horses; the gold and precious stones with which some of their harnesses were covered; and the richness of their tents, contributed to render the PERSIAN camp very pompous and magnificent.

On

^c The name which the AFGHANS give to their forlorn hope, which go on the most desperate actions.

^d NADIR SHAH afterwards used these kind of arms with great success: they are long, and carry a great distance.

On the other side there was a much smaller body of soldiers, disfigured with fatigue, and the scorching heat of the sun. Their cloaths were so ragged and torn, in so long a march, that they were scarce sufficient to cover them from the weather; and their horses being adorned with only leather and brass, there was nothing glittering among them but their spears and sabres. 1722.

The two armies stood in fight of each other the greatest part of the day, without making any motion on either side, but seeming rather to stand in mutual awe. MAGHMUD embraced this opportunity to ride through the ranks, and to encourage his soldiers. "He represented to the PERSEES, that the hour was now come, which would free them from the yoke of their tyrants; that liberty was now in their own hands, if they would prove themselves, on this occasion, worthy heirs of the valour of their ancestors." Turning to the AFGHANS and the BALOUCHES, "he exhorted them to fight with that bravery which had rendered them so often triumphant over their enemies; he reminded them of those glorious feats, and desired them to look upon the riches of ISFAHAN as the first fruit of an easy victory; a victory, without which they must inevitably perish, either by the sword in their retreat, or by hunger and thirst in the deserts."

While MAGHMUD was thus endeavouring to inspire his troops with that ardour, which they stood in need of on so important a conjuncture, the PERSIANS were taken up in debates. Though the king had sent positive orders to fight, yet the ATHEMAT DOULET, who shared the general command with the VALI of ARABIA, insisted strongly that they should avoid coming to an engagement: "It is true," said he, "we may expect the most generous efforts of the PERSIAN valour, on an occasion in which the safety of the empire, and the liberty of the emperor are at stake; but what does valour avail, if it be not armed and directed by experience? Almost all our infantry, who are the principal part of our forces, are novices in the duty of a soldier; they are entire strangers to the use of the musquet; and have we then any reason to expect that they will be able, in this undisciplined state, to stand the shock

1722. “ of the enemy’s cavalry, or to attack in such order as to pierce thro’ their
“ squadrons? Too much security is oftentimes the cause, that even the best
“ concerted undertakings miscarry. Let us not despise an enemy whom
“ fortune favours: we have 4000 pioneers with us, let these cover the
“ army with intrenchments; and if you are absolutely determined to hazard
“ a battle, these lines bordered with cannon and infantry will be a sure
“ place of retreat, in case of a misfortune. But my opinion, is to wait till
“ famine compels the enemy to attack us in our entrenchments; then
“ our cavalry fallying forth from the extremities, will take them in flank;
“ and will meet with so much the less resistance, as they will have to deal
“ with troops already shattered and broken by the continual fire to which
“ they must be exposed.”

Thus the ATHEMAT DOULET endeavoured to bring them over to an opinion, which differed but little from that which he had openly declared in council. The proposal was prudent, inasmuch as it left very little to hazard, and secured all the advantage that ought to be expected from their infantry, which otherwise must be useless. The officers who commanded in the center^e, struck with these reasons, had already approved the project; when the VALI of ARABIA, and the KOULAR AGASSI, who were afraid lest this opinion should be followed by the rest of the principal officers, cried out: “ This is no time to debate, but to fight; it
“ would be an eternal shame to so numerous an army, in which is the
“ flower of the nobility of the empire, to be afraid of appearing before
“ a gang of robbers and rebel herdsmen.” Saying this, they waited for no answer, but retired, and mounting led on their squadrons against the enemy: this served as a signal to the troops, who all moved forward at the same time, and fell upon the left wing of the AFGHANS with such impetuosity, as flung them into disorder.

MAGHMUD, who observed both armies from a throne raised on the back of an elephant, was surprized at this shock, and began to think that all was lost. His alarm was caused by the VALI of ARABIA, who having made a long winding to the right at the head of a body of ARABIAN cavalry,

^e The general of horse, and the general of the artillery;

valry, overthrew all he met in his way, and made himself master of the 1722.
camp of the AFGHANS. It is reasonable to believe, that the affair would have been soon determined in favour of the PERSIANS, if he had returned directly and charged the enemy in the rear. MAGHMUD, terrified at the danger, was preparing for flight, and had ordered the lightest of his dromedaries to be made ready for him; when a circumstance arose, that inspired him with more courageous resolutions. The ATHEMAT DOULET seeing both armies engaged, returned to his post, and charged the right wing of the enemy with as much bravery, as he had before given marks of prudence. AMAN OLA, who commanded that wing, made a feint of giving way, and retired gradually without breaking his ranks; but he had hardly let the enemy gain fifty paces upon him, when ordering his men to open their ranks of a sudden, one hundred camels appeared kneeling, each of which had one of the harquebuses above-mentioned on his back. The PERSIANS astonished at this unexpected sight, and a general discharge of this little artillery being made, most of the fore-most rank were killed, and the AFGHANS making loud shouts, attacked the rest, and obliged them to turn their backs.

AMAN OLA made the proper use of this stratagem: for without giving the PERSIANS time to recover themselves, he pursued them up to their battery, which he came behind, and having cut the cannoneers in pieces that guarded it, he caused the cannon to be pointed against the center of the PERSIAN army, who were thus put to flight before they had fought a blow. This artful step decided the fate of the day. The VALI of LORISTAN, who had lost one of his brothers in the action, and had been also wounded himself, seeing every thing rendered desperate by the defeat of the left wing, and of the center, went off directly with what soldiers he had remaining, and retired into his province. His example was followed by FERIZ OULLAH, KHAN of HAMADAN, and by ALI RIZA, KHAN of COHKILAN^f, who having called off their troops, retired each to his respective province.

In the mean time, the VALI of ARABIA having made himself master of MAGHMUD's camp, amused himself with plundering the baggage; and the

^f A country situate ten days journey from ISFAHAN towards BASSORA.

1722. tho' he had observed the enemy's motion, yet instead of attacking them in the rear, as was expected, he refused the succours, that with repeated instances were demanded of him. The AFGHANS therefore had no enemy to oppose, except the KOULAR AGASSI. This general endeavouring to vindicate his opinion given in council, continued to fight with redoubled courage and resolution. Being determined to conquer or die, he had already cut part of the opposite wing in pieces, and pushed the remainder as far as their entrenchments, when MAGHMUD seeing the field almost clear of the enemy, advanced to take him in the rear. This motion dispersed the PERSIANS, who composed the greatest part of the troops of this gallant officer; but a body of 400 GEORGIANS refusing to desert him in this extremity, he defended himself on all sides with the utmost intrepidity; till at length, after having had two horses killed under him, he was overpowered with numbers, and with the companions of his glorious temerity, died sword in hand. The defeat of this valiant troop completed the victory. The VALI of ARABIA loaded with MAGHMUD's treasure, and with the plunder of the camp, had by this time taken the road to the town, which he entered by the opposite gate ^e to that ^h by which the army had marched out against the enemy.

Such was the fatal issue of the battle of GULNABAD, in which the PERSIANS, so long accustomed to blunders in politics, took two dangerous steps; one was, to divide the command between two generals who did not agree; the other, to plant their batteries so forward, that they could not be properly supported. This last circumstance, and the sagacious conduct of AMAN OLA, gave the victory to the AFGHANS: but we may say, that the treacherous conduct of the VALI of ARABIA decided the battleⁱ. The king's army lost 15,000 men; a number which will not appear exaggerated, if we consider the circumstances of the engagement. The
greatest

^e The DER TOKCHI in the east part of ISFAHAN.

^h The HAJAN in the west.

ⁱ It has been much doubted, if the VALI of ARABIA was induced to act this base part, merely from the temptation of plunder, or from resentment of the opposition which the ATHEMAT DOULET made to his proposals; he might be indifferent, at that time, which side obtained the victory, but his conduct afterwards proved him a traitor; nor do we find that he attempted to vindicate his conduct, or acknowledge that he had been guilty of an error, nor even that the natural avidity of his ARABIANS was not to be restrained.

greatest part of the troops under the command of the KOULAR AGASSI, fell 1722, in the field of battle; the infantry was in a great measure exposed to the mercy of the conqueror; and the 2000 cannoneers, with their general, were all slaughter'd at their post. The loss of the AFGHANS was inconsiderable; and the treasure, the artillery, and baggage of the PERSIAN army, was an ample recompence for the plunder which the ARABIANS had taken in their camp.

PART

[110]

P A R T V.
T H E
R E V O L U T I O N S O F P E R S I A,
F R O M T H E
B A T T L E O F G U L N A B A D,
T O T H E
A B D I C A T I O N O F S U L T A N H U S S E I N, A N D T H E
T A K I N G O F I S F A H A N.

C H A P. XVII.

The king calls a council, and determines to remain in ISFAHAN. Preparations to defend the city. Orders sent to the khans of the provinces. The VALI of LORISTAN is declared generalissimo. MAGHMUD encamps at CHEERESTAN. Description of FARABAD; the AFGHANS take possession of it, and appear before JULFA. Description of JULFA, and the situation of the ARMENIANS.

1722.

AS soon as the news arrived of the defeat of the PERSIAN army, which was commanded by the greatest part of the nobility of the kingdom, the city of ISFAHAN was under a general consternation. The PERSIAN troops, who fled from the field of battle, exaggerated the valour and conduct of the enemy, which served to increase the panic; insomuch, that the inhabitants of this great city already figured to themselves the distresses which followed not long after, and imagined they saw the AFGHANS, with their drawn sabres, practising all imaginable barbarities.

Under

Under these extremities the king called a council, in which he represented the danger his person would be exposed to, if he stood a siege in a city unprovided with ammunition and provisions; and whose ruinous walls could be but a feeble barrier, when defended by troops disheartened by their late defeat. His danger had however inspired him with some degree of fortitude; and with an air of dignity, in a very pathetic strain, he spoke to them to this effect: "It is not for my own security, that I
 " propose to remove; a prince, who is afraid to die with his subjects, is
 " unworthy to rule over them: but the greatest part of the provinces still
 " obey me; their fate is connected with mine; for the rebel will be
 " master of the empire, as soon as he has my person in his power."

The ATHEMAT DOULET confirmed the king's remarks; adding, that it would be very imprudent to expose the king's person to the hazard of such an event; that it would be adviseable for his majesty to retire, that very night to CASBIN, while the enemy, yet intoxicated with their victory, would take no measures to oppose his retreat; that when the SHAH should be at full liberty, he might easily assemble an army, capable to raise the siege, and destroy the AFGHANS: that at all events, the loss of ISFAHAN would be only the loss of one city, which MAGHMUD could not keep with so small a number of troops; whereas, if the king should shut himself up there, the loss of ISFAHAN would draw on that of the monarchy.

This speech seemed to convince the greatest part of the assembly; when the VALI of ARABIA, who had so basely betrayed his trust that very day, and yet, by a strange fatality, was continued in his office, stood up, and spoke to this effect: "It is debating to a great disadvantage,
 " just after the loss of a battle. Whilst men are affected with fear, in con-
 " sequence of a recent misfortune, whatever their natural intrepidity and
 " discernment may be, they are but ill capable of distinguishing the real
 " magnitude of objects: even prudence loses its very nature, and be-
 " trays itself. A panic terror, caused by a trifling unforeseen accident,
 " has snatched the victory out of our hands. Ought such an accident,
 " which is not uncommon in war, to make us tremble before a weak

1722. “ and contemptible enemy? Besides, were it presumed that their chief
 “ will undertake to lay siege to so large and so populous a city as this, he
 “ would hardly dare to enter it with the contemptible gang of robbers
 “ about him. What is there then to fear? If he should be bold enough
 “ to appear before our walls, the presence of the SHAH will encourage
 “ their defenders; and the whole empire, incensed at this attempt, will
 “ fly to the assistance of their sovereign. But if his majesty should de-
 “ prive these loyal inhabitants of the opportunity of exerting that va-
 “ lour, which his presence inspires, such a step will not only stain his
 “ honour, but dishearten all his faithful subjects, and encourage the re-
 “ volted: such a behaviour, much sooner than the force of arms, will
 “ open ISFAHAN to the conqueror; and the rest of the empire, amazed
 “ to see a base SUNNIⁱ on the sacred throne of the successors of ALI,
 “ will not stir in defence of their prince, because they will conclude
 “ his fate irretrievable.”

The boldest opinion prevailed over the most prudent. SHAH HUSSEIN was ashamed to abandon his capital, and therefore determined to defend it; so that nothing more was thought on, than to make a vigorous resistance against the enemy. New levies were made; the ruinous parts of the walls were repaired; intrenchments were thrown up in those places which were most exposed, and especially at the head of the bridges which open a communication with the suburbs; and every other precaution taken, that the proximity of the danger, and the inexperience of the ministers would permit. The VALI of ARABIA was appointed governor of the town; and SHAH HUSSEIN sent messengers to the khans of the different provinces yet under his dominion, ordering them to repair with all the forces of their governments to HONSAR^k, where they were to join the VALI of LORISTAN, whom he had declared generalissimo of his armies. In fine, this monarch, more sensible than ever of the mistake he committed in treating the VALI of GEORGIA with such imperiousness, sent magnificent presents to this prince, and wrote to him in the most pressing manner, to persuade him to march to his assistance.

These

ⁱ It may be presumed that he pretended to be a SCHIAS, tho' he was a SUNNI himself.

^k This city is said to be about five leagues from ISFAHAN.

These regulations were prudent and suitable to the situation of affairs; 1722. but in the interim proper care was not taken to provide for a siege. The inhabitants of the open country, flying from the cruelty of the conqueror, flung themselves in crowds into the city; insomuch that the public squares, the gardens, and the streets, were every day filled with this useless multitude. The king, who did not consider the difference between a common man and a soldier, not only neglected giving orders upon this subject, but seemed to forget that there were no magazines of provisions in the city; and the dictates of fear suggesting to him, that his security must arise from his numbers, he forbade upon pain of death, every person in ISFAHAN, whether inhabitant or stranger, to stir from thence. In the mean while, some ARABS who had been sent upon the scout, having brought intelligence, that the rebels had left on the field of battle the 24 pieces of cannon, which they had taken in the engagement, a detachment of troops was sent to bring back the artillery; which they executed without any obstruction from the enemy, who continued quietly in their camp.

This inactivity was owing to the wavering disposition of MAGHMUD: he, who had hitherto shewn himself active and enterprising, now seemed astonished at his own victory. The little success he had at KHERMAN and YEZD; the vast extent of ISFAHAN, and the number of troops within its walls, gave him reason to apprehend, that the siege would be of long continuance; and that the governors of the provinces would have time to crush him with the joint forces of the empire: on the other hand, he could not with honour, nor common safety, abandon an enterprize, which had already cost him so much labour. Thus his mind was agitated with these different thoughts, when the return of the spies, whom he had sent into the city, removed his anxiety. By these he was informed of the great consternation into which the PERSIANS were thrown; from whence he concluded, that if instead of giving the enemy time to recover themselves, he had pursued them to the gates of ISFAHAN, he might have made himself master that very day of the king's throne and person. He resolved therefore to pursue his fortune. With this view he

1722. began his march, and plundering every place by the way, he encamped the 12th of the same month with his whole army near CHEERESTAN, a town a little to the eastward of ISFAHAN.

The PERSIANS finding the AFGHANS had abandoned the artillery above-mentioned¹, began to think they had no intention to lay siege to the town; but this motion of the enemy's army undeceived them, as to the fond expectation they had entertained, concerning the retreat of the AFGHANS. The first step they took in consequence of this discovery, was to abandon FARABAD, a country-palace three miles from ISFAHAN. SHAH HUSSEIN, who had exhausted the treasures amassed by the kings his predecessors, to indulge his passion for building, had spared no expence to render this palace worthy of a great monarch. In fact, it was so spacious and magnificent, that he had often entertained thoughts of abandoning the capital, to make this his ordinary residence. The palace was encompassed with strong lofty walls, flanked at small distances with towers. In his present circumstances, this place ought therefore to have been considered as a fortress which might incommode the enemy, or at least retard their operations; but the rebels were scarce arrived at CHEERESTAN, when orders were sent to abandon FARABAD; which was executed in so imprudent a manner, that altho' the PERSIAN garrison might have easily carried off the cannon, they contented themselves with burying them.

This was too gross a blunder to escape the AFGHANS: some of their squadrons who were upon the scout, hearing what had passed, marched with all expedition, and took possession of the castle and its artillery, the 19th of the same month, without meeting with any opposition: they were soon joined by the rest of the army. MAGHMUD being now advantageously situated, and master of several pieces of cannon, determined to repair the loss of time, occasioned by his late irresolution; accordingly he mounted on horse-back, and appeared the same day before JULFA.

This town is situated only a mile and a half south of ISFAHAN, on the south banks of the river ZENDEROUD, or fresh river, on the side of which
it

¹ It is hard to reconcile this conduct, otherwise than by supposing that the AFGHANS might be ignorant of the art of rendering the cannon useless, and finding them cumbersome, chose to neglect them.

it is extended for almost three miles. It was founded by ABAS the GREAT, 1722. on the following occasion. The ARMENIANS having revolted against the TURKS, and submitted to this prince, he removed part of the inhabitants of ARMENIA into different provinces of PERSIA. Those of the antient JULFA, a town on the banks of the ARAS, were transported to ISFAHAN, from whence they afterwards removed, and settled in this place, to which they gave the name of their former residence. The people who had been drawn from ERIVAN, SHIRVAN^m, and the lower ARMENIA, had settled in the suburbs of ISFAHAN; but ABAS desirous of improving this new colony, obliged them to remove to JULFA, together with some PERSEES of the neighbourhood of KHERMAN and YEZD; by this means, four new quarters were formed. Most of the PERSEES took occasion to retire from thence, so that of fifteen hundred families, which were at first computed in their quarter, there remained only three hundred, all composed of artificers and labouring men. But the ARMENIANS being an industrious active people, applied themselves to commerce, and by their care this colony soon arose to a flourishing condition.

ABAS I. was too great a politician, to neglect any measure that might contribute to the welfare of such an establishment. He lent them considerable sums of money, without demanding any interest; he exempted them from all kinds of servitude; he granted them the free exercise of their religion; and in order to screen them from the jealousy and avarice of the PERSIAN officers, he allowed them a KALENTER of their own nation, to whom he assigned a place at those celebrated feasts, in which, pursuant to the custom of remotest antiquity, the kings of PERSIA dine in public with the grandees of the realm.

Some of the successors of this prince followed the same maxim, and JULFA in a very little time became a considerable place. It had the appearance of a republic, founded in the midst of a foreign nation; no MAHOMMEDAN was permitted to settle there, and the rigor of the law of retaliation, caused the inhabitants to be respected even by the PERSIANS themselves. The ARMENIANS of JULFA thus encouraged by so necessary a protection,

^m Part of the antient MEDIA.

1722. were in a thriving condition for many years; and carried on in different parts of the world a considerable trade, which was very useful to the state. But the court at length, forgetful of its own interests, grew tired of favouring them; and in SHAH HUSSEIN's reign, their privileges, which had suffered some diminution under his predecessors, fell into contempt. Under this government, no regard was paid to the law of retaliation. The ecclesiastics offended at the equality which this law established between Mussulmen and christians, introduced a custom, that if a PERSIAN killed an ARMENIAN, he should expiate the crime by giving a load of corn to the relations of the deceased. The ARMENIANS considered so ignominious and unjust a treatment, as a mark of servitude: but they had no relief, and were equally a sport to the avarice of the great, and the insolence of the people. While they groaned under these calamities, industry declined among them; and the spirit of commerce, for which they had been so much distinguished, was in a great measure suppressed; so that they thought of little more than to preserve their lives, and the property they had already acquired.

C H A P. XVIII.

The conduct of the PERSIANS towards the ARMENIANS of JULFA. The AFGHANS make themselves masters of JULFA; their barbarities towards the ARMENIANS. Description of ISFAHAN. MAGHMUD repulsed at the bridge of SHIRASS.

THE ARMENIANS having been thus treated with great contempt, it was feared they would cherish a resentment, which might induce them to change their masters. The PERSIANS, at least, tho' they now stood in such need of their services, were jealous; and in this, as in many other instances, prepared the way to their own ruin, for fear of being undone. For the ARMENIANS, who are brave, and tenacious of their property, it ought naturally to have been expected, would have struggled hard to be delivered from a rapacious enemy: however, upon

the first news of MAGHMUD's arrival, the king enjoined them to appear with their military equipage before his palace, intending, as he said, to entrust them with the guard of his person, during the absence of his household troops, who were going to march against the rebels. The ARMENIANS, flattered with this testimony of benevolence, repaired to the place appointed in great numbers; but no sooner were they drawn up, than they were commanded to lay down their arms, and dismissed with strict orders to deliver up what arms might be still remaining among them. Tho' such a mark of distrust was more proper to provoke, than to soften the minds of a brave people; yet as soon as the ARMENIANS knew that the AFGHANS were advancing, they desired succour, offering to maintain the troops at their own expence. They repeated their instances, as the rebels approached; and finding that the VALI of ARABIA, who had promised to send them assistance, broke his word, they still put themselves in a posture of making as good a defence, as their situation and circumstances would permit.

Things were thus situated, when the AFGHANS appeared before JULFA: they attacked the place as soon as they arrived, which was in the night-time; and the assault lasted two hours. The besieged, in order to make the enemy believe they had regular troops, called one another during the engagement by PERSIAN names; and tho' they were very indifferently armed, yet they defended themselves with so much bravery, that the utmost the enemy could do, was to seize upon a little entrenchment, which had been thrown up in a hurry. The ARMENIANS, encouraged by this success, waited for the VALI of ARABIA, designing to attack the AFGHANS in their turn, as soon as they had any succour; but this general made them sensible of the indifference he bore to the common cause: for instead of keeping his word with them, observing that SEFFIE MYRZA^a was marching during the attack at the head of a detachment of horse, in order to make a diversion, he hindered him from proceeding any further, by representing that the king his father did not intend that the presumptive heir of the crown should expose himself to so dangerous an encounter.

This

^a This was HUSSEIN's eldest son, who was of a martial spirit, and therefore an object of jealousy among the eunuchs.

1722. This extraordinary proceeding, together with that of disarming the ARMENIANS, induced people to think, that it was the king's intention to sacrifice JULFA and its inhabitants to the safety of the capital. Nor is it altogether improbable, that this weak prince, through the instigation of his treacherous minister, the VALI of ARABIA, might imagine that the AFGHANS would be contented with the wealth they should find in that town, without persisting in so hazardous an enterprize as the siege of ISFAHAN. This ARABIAN prince, by religion a SUNNI, and actuated with the same ambition as his father, who thirty years before had attempted to shake off the PERSIAN yoke, either held a correspondence with MAGHMUD, which is most probable; or was governed by the pernicious maxim of those generals, who, to prolong their own authority, do not chuse to terminate a war, when it is in their power to bring things to a fortunate issue for their sovereigns and their country.

The ARMENIANS had not time to refresh themselves after the fatigues of the first assault, but were preparing against a second, when some of the besiegers taking the advantage of the obscurity of the night, went all round the town, to try if a breach was practicable in their walls of earth*. A PERSEE in their service, undertook to pierce a hole through the wall; which having done to his purpose, an elephant was brought up to it, and by his means a part of those feeble ramparts was broke down: NAZRULLA, who commanded the party, took possession of the breach; and the ARMENIANS perceiving that he waited only for day-light to enter, deputed the chief persons among them, before the night was spent, to treat of a capitulation. The AFGHAN heard their proposals, as one who was sure of conquest: he obliged them to surrender at discretion, and to ransom their lives and effects, by a contribution of 70,000 tomans^P.

Hard as this condition appeared to the ARMENIANS, MAGHMUD added another more severe: for scarce had he been master of JULFA, when he demanded of the ARMENIANS a certain number of young virgins, which they should pick out of the most considerable families of their nation.

The

* Those of ISFAHAN are of the same kind, as indeed are almost all the fortified places in the kingdom.

^P 175,000*l*.

The AFGHANS were masters of the town; so that the ARMENIANS had 1722, no other resolution to take than that of submission. All the young women therefore that could be found, who were remarkable for their beauty, and whose age exceeded nineteen, were brought before certain persons appointed for this examination: these chose fifty out of the number, and conducted them to FARABAD, adorned with their richest cloaths, and with all their jewels, where they were presented to the conqueror. MAGHMUD kept part of them for his own harram, and distributed the remainder among his principal officers.

The ARMENIANS are very jealous of their honour, so that nothing could cut them deeper than to deliver up their daughters. The disconsolate mothers made JULFA resound with their lamentations; some of those young maids were so shocked to see themselves abandoned to the enemies of their country, that they died with excessive grief. The AFGHANS, whose hearts could not but feel, in some measure, the distress of these young women, and whose religion by no means allows of any violence, sent those home who were most afflicted; and others were ransomed by their parents; so that in a few days, there remained but a very small part of them in this kind of slavery.

The AFGHANS, humane in this respect, were inexorable in regard to the contribution. The ARMENIANS pretending that the chief part of their effects was in ISFAHAN, said they were under an absolute impossibility of paying such a sum. They offered, however, to enter into an obligation of paying it, as soon as they recovered their effects, that is, upon the taking of the city, or at the conclusion of a peace. This was making the fruits of the first success depend upon a new event. MAGHMUD, pretended to be satisfied with the proposal; but as soon as he had their bond in his hands, he ordered three of the principal men among them, who had signed it, to be arrested as sureties; and pretending that his treasure was exhausted, he insisted upon their paying immediately what money they had in their hands, as part of the sum. In consequence of this determination, he ordered their houses to be searched.

1722. The ARMENIANS, whose avarice had caused them to overshoot their mark^a, began to be sensible of the folly they had committed, in endeavouring to evade the payment; but it was too late to rectify the mistake. The officers who made the search, discharged their commission with the utmost exactness; carrying off every valuable thing they could find, as gold, silver, jewels, moveables, rich silks, &c. so that the inhabitants, except the security of their persons, experienced on this occasion, almost every act of violence and barbarity, as when a town is taken by storm.

All this wealth did not satisfy the avarice of the conqueror; recourse was had to tortures, in order to increase it. The principal persons among the ARMENIANS were most cruelly bastinadoed, to compel them to discover the several effects, which they, and their friends, were supposed to have concealed. None of them could withstand the severity of the torture, except DOMINIC JAQUES KARDELANS, a man of weight and figure among his countrymen, and pretty far advanced in years, whom all the rigor of this punishment could not oblige to discover any other person. From this man and his brothers they took twelve thousand tomans^b, in ready money, and seven thousand^c from SHERIMANS^d; hence it is very probable, that what they got by plunder, greatly exceeded the sum demanded: and yet it was valued at only twenty thousand tomans^e, which he ordered to be struck off from the seventy thousand mentioned in the bond.

Such acts of violence flung the whole town into the utmost consternation: the missionaries withdrew to ISFAHAN, each order leaving only one religious person in their house. The bishop, and some of the inhabitants, took the same resolution; and though the ARMENIANS were not ignorant, that the PERSIANS accused them of holding a correspondence with the enemy, yet a great many of them had already thrown themselves into the town, and others were preparing to follow their example, when MAGHMUD ordered guards to be posted, to hinder any further desertion.

While

^a See remark, Vol. I. page 120. ^b 30,000/. ^c 17,500. ^d These are remarkable great traders to this day; NADIR in 1747, caused some of them to be burnt alive, to extort a confession of their wealth. ^e 50,000/. in part of 175,000.

While JULFA was thus a prey to the avarice and cruelty of the rebels; 1722. their chief was preparing to begin the siege of ISFAHAN. This city is distinguished, no less for the magnificence of its buildings, than for the vast tract it incloses; the circumference being ordinarily computed at 24 miles, including its gardens and suburbs. It is situated in a plain to the north of the ZENDEROUD, which separates it from JULFA. The source of this river is distant only three days journey: there are various accounts concerning the course of it, but it is agreed to be of very small extent. ABAS the GREAT caused a channel to be cut thro' the mountains, thirty leagues distant, by which means the waters of the river MAHMOUD KER, were conveyed into the ZENDEROUD; which renders it as wide and deep, upon the melting of the snows in the spring, as the SEINE is in the winter at PARIS.

There is a communication between the two banks of the river by different bridges. The largest and finest is that of JULFA: it is 360 geometrical paces in length, and 13 in breadth; the two extremities of it are flanked by four round towers, with a covered gallery, which ranges on both sides, the length of the bridge; the whole decorated with the richest ornaments of PERSIAN architecture. It is joined by two causeways, made with a gentle descent to a double row of trees above 3000 paces long. This delightful alley is lined with terrasses and plane trees: it is called TOHERBAG, or four gardens, and is bordered with gardens which belong to the king. The length of it is terminated by a large pavilion towards the town, and on the opposite side by a building, in the royal garden, called HAZAR JERIB, or thousand gardens. The town of JULFA on the one side, and the suburb of ABASABAD on the other, stretch along the ZENDEROUD: from the bridge of JULFA to the bridge ABASABAD is about a mile and a half: the last is so called from the neighbouring suburb, and serves as a communication to the western extremity of the town.

The bridge of BARBAROUI, which is less distant than that of ABASABAD from the bridge of JULFA, is the third we meet with descending: like the latter it is lined with galleries, and is not so much inferior to

1722. it in architecture, as in length. About a mile further, advancing eastward, is the bridge of SHIRASS, so denominated, because it is the roadway from ISFAHAN to that city; and near it is the village of CHEERESTAN. This city was now in its highest pitch of splendor, and esteemed the largest and most magnificent in ASIA^x, with six hundred thousand inhabitants, exclusive of those crowds, who had fled thither for shelter from different parts of the open country, and were reckoned near an hundred thousand souls.

Such was the importance of this city, which MAGHMUD dared to besiege with so small an army. This young prince, who was still encamped at FARABAD, ordered entrenchments to be thrown up between the river and JULFA; and the same day he made himself master of this town, he commanded some squadrons to present themselves before the ramparts of ISFAHAN, to observe the disposition of the enemy. This detachment, supported by a considerable part of the army, began to execute their orders; but the PERSIANS, now recovered from their first panic, gave them so warm a reception, that they were obliged to retire, with some loss.

MAGHMUD then marched himself in person, intending to make a general assault. The 21st of MARCH he appeared at the head of his army, upon the banks of the ZENDEROUD; but finding the river overflowed, and the bridges strongly guarded, this action ended at the right, and in the center, in some random shots from their cannon, which were very ill served: the affair was more serious to the left; for the officer who commanded that attack, giving way designedly, drew the troops that guarded the bridge of ABASABAD after him; upon which he faced about, and brought on an engagement, in which about 200 men on each side were slain. The PERSIANS still continued masters of the bridge; and a retreat being sounded, the AFGHAN army retired to their camp, after riding and hollowing, rather than fighting, for the space of six hours.

The besieged, who saw what passed from the tops of the terraces, with which the houses of ISFAHAN are covered, began to alter the opinion which they had conceived of the enemy's bravery. Their spirits were greatly raised upon

^x It is probable some cities in CHINA exceeded it.

upon reflecting, how ill this last attack had been contrived, and how weakly executed: they now looked upon the slowness of the AFGHAN chief in advancing after the battle of GULNABAD, and the great precaution he used in entrenching himself, as a certain sign of a timorous disposition; but they were soon obliged to fly again to the defence of their ramparts. For MAGHMUD being informed by his spies in the city, of the effect of his imprudent enterprize, had taken a sudden resolution to re-establish the reputation of his arms by some signal exploit. 1722.

With this design his army appeared in battalia the 23d of the same month, and while part of his troops were founding the river in different parts, as if they intended to ford it, the remainder fell sword in hand upon the post which defended the bridge of SHIRASS. The AFGHANS behaved, on this occasion, with so much resolution and bravery, that they overthrew the PERSIANS at the very first onset. Their impetuosity carried all before them; they were already masters of the bridge, and considering the confusion into which the PERSIANS were thrown, the rebels might have entered the town pell-mell along with them, had not ACHMED AGA, a white eunuch, and a soldier of approved valour, whom the king had now deputed governor of ISFAHAN, come up with a body of veteran troops, and renewed the engagement. He drove the AFGHANS immediately back to the middle of the bridge; and while both parties were fighting there with equal obstinacy, some pieces of cannon, that were in battery upon the banks of the river, were pointed ^y at the AFGHANS, which cleared the bridge, and put the rebels to flight. ACHMED AGA pursued them as far as their entrenchments, and made a terrible slaughter. MAGHMUD had been undone, if the VALI of ARABIA had fallen upon him at the same time with his troops; but this prince now confirmed his treachery, in the esteem of those who were not infatuated; and sacrificed his reputation as a soldier, as well as the welfare of the state, to his sinister purposes ^z.

^y This signal piece of service was performed by one JACOB a COURLANDER, who from a cartwright, was made an officer of the artillery. ^z As generalissimo he had fifty tomans, or 125 £. a day, but this motive only could not have induced him to make a sacrifice of those whose pay he received.

C H A P. XIX.

MAGHMUD sends a deputation to ISFAHAN with proposals of peace, which are refused. He makes himself master of the bridge ABASABAD, and invests the city. The troops marching to the relief of the besieged are defeated. Gallant behaviour of the inhabitants of BEN ISFAHAN. Treacherous conduct of the VALI of ARABIA. Defeat of the KHAN of COHKILAN.

1722. **M**AGHMUD was greatly disheartened at his disappointment in the last action; the promises of the VALI of ARABIA were his chief dependance; and yet what security could he have of the fidelity of a traitor? Thus he was perplexed in what manner he should proceed. The vigorous defence made by the besieged, and the repulses he met with in his several attacks, alarmed his fears, lest his troops might become dispirited, if his next attempt should meet with no better success. He knew, however, that ISFAHAN was destitute of provisions, and that it must fall, if he could cut off all communication between that city and the country: but for this purpose, it was necessary for the communication of his troops, to throw a bridge over the river; or to make himself master of one of those which had been so gallantly maintained by the PERSIANS: besides, the greatness of the circumference rendered this project extremely dangerous, as the siege could not be turned into a blockade, without giving the khans of the provinces time to assemble; and the junction of any body of forces with those in the city, must render his enterprize abortive. In order to obtain a peace, the king had some time before offered him a large sum of money, with the sovereignty of KANDAHAR, and consented to yield up also the province of HASSARAI, but refused to grant him one of the princesses his daughters in marriage. This refusal determined MAGHMUD to lay siege to ISFAHAN, at a time when he was thinking how to secure an honourable retreat.

But now he resolved to try what he could do by negotiation, of which his enemies had set him the example. He therefore deputed one of his principal

principal officers, with a commission to offer to raise the siege, and to agree to a peace, on condition that the king would give him one of the princesses his daughters in marriage, with a portion of fifty thousand tomans^a; and acknowledge him as sovereign, not only of KANDAHAR and KHERMAN, which he already possessed, but likewise of the province of KHORASAN, which should be yielded to him by the same treaty.

SHAH HUSSEIN was under great perturbation; but the conditions appeared very dishonourable. The manner in which the AFGHANS had hitherto conducted themselves, had flattered him into a belief, that the governors of the provinces, and the tributary princes would have time to march to his assistance, and there was then no reason to doubt but the enemy would be crushed; he therefore rejected these proposals.

MAGHMUD being informed by the return of his deputy, of the little success of his commission, prepared to obtain by famine, what he no longer expected by force of arms. This enterprize, however, was extremely delicate. The PERSIANS had by advanced posts, made a further addition to the largeness of the circumference, insomuch that the AFGHANS could not divide themselves into so many bodies, as there were places to occupy, without running the risk of being beaten in separate detachments: these difficulties did not retard MAGHMUD, who secretly renewing his engagements with the VALI of ARABIA, applied all his thoughts to the execution of his project.

After he had taken this resolution, he detached different bodies of troops to ravage the district of ISFAHAN. This territory contained above one thousand villages, built by the orders of ABAS the GREAT, who peopled them not only with the natives of IRAC AGEMI, but likewise with several families which he transported thither from other parts of the empire. The plain is very fruitful, and produces provisions sufficient to maintain both the inhabitants of the open country, and those of the capital. The AFGHANS charged with this commission, took possession of some of these villages by main force, of others by cutting off the waters, and many

^a 125,000*l*.

1722. many were abandoned upon their approach; insomuch that the number of those which by an obstinate resistance had tired them out, and escaped falling into their hands, was very small. The AFGHANS, according to the barbarities of the east, put most of the men to the sword, and brought off great numbers of the women and children into slavery: it is said that upon making a distribution of them, five or six fell to the share of every private soldier. The AFGHANS then sent home the ARMENIAN girls, that were yet left in their possession.

This expedition served not only to cut off all forage and provisions from the city, but likewise to bring great plenty into their own camp. Their magazines being thus filled, they might now invest the place without being obliged to send out detachments for provisions or forage. This was of the greater moment, as MAGHMUD had waited in vain for a reinforcement from KHERMAN and KANDAHAR; however, he augmented his forces by making soldiers of many of those who had followed his army as menial servants, supplying their places with prisoners whose lives he had spared.

From the affair of the bridge of SHIRASS, till the latter end of APRIL, that is, during the whole time they were plundering the open country, MAGHMUD had amused the besieged with different negotiations; but as soon as he had recruited his army, and his different detachments had joined him, he resolved to break off this kind of truce. The great object he had in view for the present, was to open a passage over the river, which a particular accident gave him a favourable opportunity of accomplishing. The head of the bridge ABASABAD was covered by an entrenchment, lined with some pieces of cannon. A detachment of GEORGIANS, to whom the defence of this bridge was entrusted, had obtained a supply of spirituous liquors: MAGHMUD was no sooner informed of this incident, which happened the last day of APRIL, than he detached fifteen hundred men to attack them. The GEORGIANS, as he had foreseen, were all stupified, or not able to stand, so that they were cut to pieces, hardly making any resistance; and the AFGHANS having made themselves masters of this important post, secured the possession of it, by turning the artillery against

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the

the enemy. Part of the army filed off immediately over this bridge, and spread themselves all round the town. Guards were placed at the principal passages, and scouts ordered to march continually from one of these posts to the other, so that ISFAHAN was that same day entirely invested. 1722.

This success alarmed the besieged; they had for some time made earnest application for liberty to attack the enemy; but now their request was changed into murmurs. They loudly declared that MAGHMUD dreading the bravery of the PERSIAN troops, which he had so lately experienced, was determined to avoid all occasion of fighting, and endeavoured to destroy them by famine: that to temporize on so pressing an occasion was betraying the common cause; that it was no longer time to deliberate; that their only resource was to march against the rebels, before hunger had destroyed part of the citizens, and rendered the rest unable to make use of their arms. This generous and prudent resolution, if it had been carried into execution, would in all probability have quashed their enemies, and it really was the only expedient left. The ATHEMAT DOULET and most of the grandees were of this opinion, and even the king thought so himself; but this unhappy prince soon changed his sentiment. The VALI OF ARABIA had so disguised his treacherous purposes, as to have an absolute ascendant over his weak and fluctuating mind: and tho' after what passed, this fatal advice ought in all reason to have confirmed what might otherwise be only a strong suspicion of treason, yet he easily prevailed on HUSSEIN to temporize, in hopes of the succours which he expected.

The inhabitants of ISFAHAN began now to feel the dreadful effects of famine; and all their hopes seemed to vanish. The governors of the provinces looking upon themselves as able, each separately, to beat the rebels, had refused to serve under ALI MERDAN KHAN, VALI OF LORISTAN, who, in conformity to the orders of the court, appeared at the head of ten thousand men at HONSAR, where he expected they would join him. CASSUM, KHAN of the BACTIARIANS^b, was the first who appeared with twelve

^b BAKTHIAR, in PERSIC, signifies happy. These are the BACTIARIANS situate west of ISFAHAN; the ordinary residence of whose KHAN, is said to be the town of HONSAR. These people inhabit

1722. twelve thousand horse, and advanced towards ISFAHAN; but as AMAN OLA kept the field with a flying camp, he fell upon the KHAN when he was least expected. Two thousand BACTIARIANS were killed in this engagement, and the rest were dispersed and put to flight.

The love which the VALI of LORISTAN bore to his country, gave him a quick sensibility of this misfortune; though it was an effect of the contempt shewn to his authority. This prince had been banished for some time to KHERMAN, by the artifice of one of his brothers, who supplanted him in his command of VALI; but as soon as he knew that the AFGHANS were marching towards the capital, he came to offer his services. His experience and valour, virtues so necessary in these circumstances, were so well known, that he was reinstated in his principality; and he justified this mark of confidence, by the bravery with which he behaved at the battle of GULNABAD. But not satisfied with having given this mark of fidelity; he had, since the commencement of the siege, amassed a quantity of provision, and designed to force one of the posts belonging to the rebels, and to convoy it into ISFAHAN. He was just upon the point of making this attempt; when his brother defeated the design, by a new piece of treachery.

This wretch, who was ambitious of a dignity which he did not merit, and to which, as a younger brother, the order of birth gave him no right; took the opportunity to debauch part of his brother's troops, and to take the command himself, at a time when this prince was gone upon a journey of some days, in order to make new levies; and as he was now master of the convoy, and of a considerable number of soldiers, without waiting his brother's return with fresh forces, he joined the KHAN of HAMADAN, and marched with him to the relief of ISFAHAN. But his perfidy, tho' it might have a mixture of virtue, was attended with a signal punishment. These two chiefs had 6000 men under their command, and expected to be able to join the troops of COHKILAN upon their march; but falling in with the body of AFGHANS commanded by AMAN OLA, within

habit the eastern parts of the deserts towards BAGDAT: they live mostly in tents, and are divided into two tribes, called CHAHAR-LING and EFH-LING. They pretend to have embraced christianity under CONSTANTINE the GREAT.

within three days journey of ISFAHAN, they were attacked before they had time to recover their surprize; above 3000 of their men saved themselves by flight, among whom was the brother of the VALI of LORISTAN: yet he did not long escape the fate he seemed to deserve; for ALI MERDAN KHAN, provoked at an action which defeated the chief hopes of the empire, sacrificed this unnatural brother to his own resentment, and to the public vengeance.

AMAN OLA having taken possession of this convoy, with all the baggage of the PERSIAN troops, was fully sensible of the great consequence of his victory; but he stained the lustre of it by his cruelty. Part of the PERSIANS had laid down their arms, upon promise of quarter; yet he paid no regard to his word, for he saved only those from whom he expected a considerable ransom, abandoning the rest to the inhumanity of his soldiers, who killed them in cold blood.

Three miles from ISFAHAN, there is a town called BEN ISFAHAN^c, situated on the declivity of a hill, and fortified with the addition of some art, at the foot of which extends a plain, which several rivulets of running water contribute to render as fruitful as it is agreeable. After the battle of GULNABAD, many flocked thither from the neighbouring villages, so that there was a number of men capable to bear arms; and these had been extremely active in harassing the enemy. Having now received intelligence, that the AFGHANS were returning to their camp after their victory, much fatigued with the march, and without observing any order; they attacked them with great valour, and with an eager thirst of revenging the death of their countrymen, insomuch that they put them to flight, and seized on their baggage and convoy.

MAGHMUD was so much provoked at this affront, which might have been attended with dangerous consequences in the present situation of his affairs; that he instantly mounted on horse-back, and putting himself at the head of a body of cavalry, overtook the enemy as they were returning home with their booty. Fortune however favoured this prince

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^c In ARABIC as well as HEBREW, son of ISFAHAN.

1722. as little as it had done his general. These peasants gave him so warm and so resolute a reception, that after cutting part of his troops in pieces, they obliged him to turn his back, and to leave them a considerable number of prisoners, among whom were his uncle, his younger brother, and two of his cousins.

The vexation caused by this fresh disgrace, did not affect MAGHMUD so tenderly, as his fears for the preservation of persons whom he loved, and who were so nearly related to him. As soon as he returned to his camp, he sent an officer to SHAH HUSSEIN, entreating him to interpose his authority in their behalf; and this prince glad of an opportunity of doing an act of humanity, and still fondly expecting an accommodation, immediately dispatched MIRZA RAHIM, one of the officers of his court. The AFGHANS escorted this messenger as far as BEN ISFAHAN: he made all possible expedition, but he arrived too late; for at his entering the town, he saw the dead bodies of the captives fixed upon stakes; when he complained at their having acted so precipitately, in an affair of that importance, they stopped his mouth by telling him; that barbarians who, contrary to their promise, had murdered their prisoners in cold blood, ought not to be surprized, if they should meet with such treatment in their turn, when there was no promise given. Tho' MAGHMUD might naturally have expected these reprisals, they flung him into a kind of frenzy. He immediately ordered all the PERSIANS in his power to be massacred upon the spot; and not contented with so cruel a revenge, he forbid his men to grant any quarter hereafter to the enemy. His mind was agitated for some days with the emotions of grief and revenge; but as soon as he recovered, and began to reflect seriously, he fell into a state of despondency. He had never flattered himself with the hopes of reducing ISFAHAN, but by the reputation of his arms; and when that was lost, he could hardly expect, that the VALI of ARABIA would be able to prevent the besieged from taking advantage of his disgraces, by attacking him in their turn; or else, that this treacherous general, alarmed at his ill success, would cease to favour a party, which fortune seemed to have abandoned. In these embarrassing circumstances, he reinforced the guards of the

the bridge ABASABAD, and the other posts; and leaving only a very small garrison in JULFA, he ordered the remainder of his army to return to FARABAD, as if he intended to secure his retreat.

The fate of the empire was then in the king's hands. He might have easily forced some of those posts which were at too great a distance to be able to support each other; and if he had done that, or even made a feint towards it, there was reason to presume that the enemy would have abandoned their several stations; and instead of besieging, would have been besieged themselves. The ARMENIANS of JULFA, who were accused of favouring the rebels, and yet continued always faithful to their sovereign, to whom they gave exact intelligence of every thing that was passing, signalized their zeal on this occasion. They gave notice to the court of the consternation which had spread itself throughout the camp of the AFGHANS; and in order to induce them to make a proper use of it, they offered to put the garrison of JULFA to the sword, as soon as they could see the king's troops engaged with the enemy. This was such a proposal as no one in their right senses could refuse to accept, for there was great probability of its succeeding; and the AFGHANS would then have been inevitably undone. If the bridge of ABASABAD had been attacked on both sides, at one and the same time, it could never have held out; the detachments placed at the several posts, deprived of all hopes of succours, or even of a retreat, would have been forced one after another; and the remainder of the army, invested at FARABAD, to all human appearance would have been reduced to the necessity of imploring the clemency of the PERSIANS: the least benefit they could expect from such an enterprize, must have been the opening a passage for the convoy which the inhabitants of BEN-ISFAHAN had recovered.

These advantages were so evident, that the king could not help seeing them; and the troops received orders to act in consequence: but the VALI of ARABIA their commander, preserved the AFGHANS from this danger. This prince judging that his treacherous conduct would be discovered, if the enemy raised the siege, marched out of the town, but with a full resolution not to fight. He evaded coming to action for some

1722. days, under pretence that he waited for a body of troops, which, according to the advices he had received, was set out from one of the provinces, and could not be long upon their march; and having by this delay cooled the king's ardour in regard to his project, and given MAGHMUD time to provide for his security, he brought his army back into the city; alledging, that as the succours did not come, he did not think it prudent to hazard an action, which was to decide the fate of the empire, upon the promise of so suspected a people as the ARMENIANS of JULFA. This step saved MAGHMUD, and a new event soon revived his hopes. The KHAN of COHKILAN, being ignorant of the defeat of the troops which were to join him, was in full march towards the capital, when he was attacked, as the others were before him, at a time he did not imagine the enemy so near; and after losing two thousand men in the engagement, he made the best of his way back to his province with eight thousand men.

CHAP. XX.

SHAH HUSSEIN *applies in vain to the VALI of GEORGIA for assistance. He declares his son TÆHMAS MYRZA his successor. TÆHMAS escapes from ISFAHAN, and endeavours to raise an army to march to the assistance of his father. Famine in ISFAHAN. ACHMED AGA makes a vigorous sally to open a passage for a convoy of provisions, but is defeated by the treachery of the VALI of ARABIA. Death of ACHMED AGA.*

THE affliction which this news caused in ISFAHAN, was increased by another piece of intelligence, received soon after it. The king depended upon the GEORGIANS as his deliverers; the valour of those people was equally known to the PERSIANS, and the rebels; and there was no reason to doubt, but the enemy would raise the siege, upon the first notice of their march. From this persuasion, SHAH HUSSEIN wrote in the most pressing terms to their prince, immediately after the battle of GULNABAD; but the proud VACHTANGA, not being yet able to overcome the mortification which this monarch had given him, by preventing his
revenge

revenge on the LESGEES, adhered to the rash oath he had made on that 1722. occasion, and by his present refusal to fight, sacrificed the whole empire.

As soon as it was known, that no assistance could be expected from the GEORGIANS; the apprehensions, which the inexperience of the rebels, and the advantages obtained over them, had in some measure suspended, revived with greater force. All hopes of success were now banished; and the minds of the people were intirely filled with the ideas of their past misfortunes, and those with which they were yet threatened. It was notorious, that the governors of the provinces were fully resolved not to submit to the authority of the VALI of LORISTAN; and the defeat of the KHANS of the BACTIARIANS, of HAMADAN, and COHKILAN, was a proof that no good was to be expected, so long as they refused to unite under the same commander.

As the danger increased every day, the king thought it high time to enter into some measures, to prevent the whole royal family from being involved in one common ruin. This monarch had fourteen sons, and four daughters. Three days after the battle of GULNABAD, he had declared ABAS MYRZA the eldest, his successor to the throne, and resigned the care of the government into his hands. This young prince being of a very warm temper, and disdaining to dissimulate, began his administration with ordering the VALI of ARABIA, the first physician, and some other persons of figure, to be put to death: however, they contrived to ward off the blow, by obtaining of the king to shut him up again in the seraglio; where, according to the policy of the state, he had been hitherto confined with his brothers. SEFFIE MYRZA, who followed him in order of birth, was substituted in his stead, but did not succeed better; for the courtiers judging him too weak to govern, about a month after he underwent the same fate. The third brother was not chosen, because the too scrupulous attachment which he professed to the duties of religion, seemed to disqualify him for such an office; so that TÆHMAS^d MYRZA, who was next to him in order of birth, was acknowledged towards the end of MAY, presumptive heir of the crown.

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^d This prince's right name is TÆMASHEB, which in the antient PERSIAN language signifies most pure.

1722. The latter end of JUNE, the king resolved to send this young prince out of ISFAHAN. The desire of securing in his person a legitimate successor, was not the only motive, which induced him to take this resolution; he was also willing by this means, to deprive his generals of all pretence of disobedience, hoping that the difficulty they made to unite the forces of their respective governments, would no longer subsist, as soon as they had orders to assemble under the command of the presumptive heir of the crown. AMAN OLA, who had been sent with some forces to attack the troops, which were marching to the relief of ISFAHAN, was not yet returned, and his absence weakened the main army of the AFGHANS; insomuch that they could hardly supply forces sufficient to guard the different posts, which shut up the several avenues to the town.

TÆHMAS MYRZA being determined to follow the directions of the king his father, set out from ISFAHAN the 21st of JUNE in the night, escorted by three hundred chosen horse. MAHOMMED EMIR, surnamed ASHREFF^e SULTAN, son of MIR ABDALLAH, whom MAGHMUD had deprived of his throne and life in KANDAHAR, commanded the post which intercepted the communication between the town and the country, on the side of the gate TOKCHI. MAGHMUD's mother was extremely fond of this young lord, and had by her intreaties saved him more than once from the cruelty of her son. ASHREFF dissembled the aversion he had conceived against the murderer of his father; and behaved with so much prudence and valour on every occasion, at the same time giving such demonstrations of zeal for the interest of his chief, that at length he gained his confidence, as well as the esteem of the whole army.

This post was the best guarded, as it was by the TOKCHI-gate the city could most conveniently receive succours. TÆHMAS intended to surprize it, and to force his way through, in order to retire to CASBIN. He advanced by the favour of the night; but could not escape the vigilance of the enemy, whom he found under arms, and ready to oppose him. Tho' the AFGHANS were inferior in number to the troops of TÆHMAS MYRZA, yet the engagement continued very obstinate and bloody, till

ASHREFF,

* ASHREFF signifies most noble.

ASHREFF, after losing a great part of his men, was obliged to retire to a 1722. neighbouring fort, to save the remainder of his people from the fury of the PERSIANS.

This event filled the besieged with hopes : they flattered themselves that the presence of the prince would raise compassion in every breast ; and that he would soon be in a condition to rescue them from the miseries in which they were involved. The AFGHANS on the contrary were in great consternation to hear that the heir of the diadem had escaped, and might soon return at the head of an army. MAGHMUD in particular fell into a transport of rage ; the captivity of the whole royal family being the greatest advantage he had to expect from the taking of ISFAHAN. He was heard to say in the vehemence of his wrath, “ that it would be to little purpose “ now to reduce the capital, since there would be still a prince able to “ dispute the throne with him.” His passion prevailed over his reason so much, that though ASHREFF had behaved so gallantly, he accused him of holding a correspondence with the enemy ; and condemned him to death.

So passionate and unjust a sentence however did not take place. ASHREFF appeared before an assembly of the principal officers of the army, to vindicate his innocence ; he represented to them, that the post which he had guarded, was, like several others, weakened by the detachment made from the army under AMAN OLA, and consisted only of one hundred men when TÆHMAS appeared : that this prince was at the head of a much more numerous body of troops, exceedingly well mounted, and composed of several persons of distinction of the bravest soldiers about the court : that notwithstanding these circumstances, he went out of his entrenchments to meet the prince ; but so small a number of soldiers as he had under his command, however gallantly they might behave, could not hinder the PERSIANS from forcing their way sword in hand ; and that, as a proof of his vigilance, thirty of his men were killed on the occasion. There is little room to imagine that ASHREFF was false to his trust ; for MAGHMUD having neither children nor brother of a proper age to succeed him, this young lord might be considered as his heir. The divan pro-

1722. nounced in his favour; and MAGHMUD, disguising his suspicions, restored ASHREFF to his employments.

During this transaction in the camp of the rebels, TÆHMAS MYRZA, after a forced march of twenty-four hours, reach'd CASHAN, he then proceeded to KOOM, and from thence to CASBIN. This young prince had so great a sensibility of the danger, in which he had left the king his father, that he spared no pains to compass his delivery: but private interest, and the spirit of independency, intirely baffled an authority which had no force to support it; so that neither his orders nor entreaties prevailed. The greatest part of the people in the neighbourhood of ISFAHAN, had been dispersed through fear; and want of resolution now hindered them from uniting. Besides those bodies already mentioned, which found pretences to avoid coming to the assistance of the capital; the troops of GANJA excused themselves, alledging they were occupied in opposing the incursions of the LESGEES, who were endeavouring to take advantage of the troubles. The forces in TAVRIS had mutinied against their KHAN, lately sent them from court, and consequently refused to obey the orders of the prince: thus the king hardly received any assistance from near 50,000 regular troops, which were quartered on those frontiers^f.

The feudatory princes of the empire, being less interested than the natural subjects, in the preservation of the monarchy, shewed as little zeal on this occasion; and many considered the extremity to which their sovereign was reduced, as a proper opportunity to recover their independency. The VALI of LORISTAN, who kept still in the neighbourhood of HONSAR, seeing the impossibility of assembling an army, marched back with his troops into his own country.

The only hopes which TÆHMAS had now left, was to find more submission in the SHAH SEVEN^g. TÆHMAS having summoned this militia, most

^f SHAH SULIMAN, the predecessor and father of HUSSEIN, maintained 130,000 men on the frontiers, without reckoning his household troops, which were 14000 men. ^g The well affectioned to the king; this is a name they give to a militia, very little different from that of the

most of those lords pretended they were not obliged to march, unless the king commanded in person; and the small number furnished by the rest, consisted only of peasants ill kept and ill paid; who, conceiving a dislike to military service, from the fatigues of their march, soon disbanded, and returned to their home, before they had reached the general rendezvous. 1722.

In the mean while, the scarcity of provisions increased, and the besieged became desperate. The grandees, as well as the common people, plainly saw that the only way to open a passage for a convoy of provisions, was to attack the posts of the enemy. The king, yet incapable of supporting any resolution of himself, referred those who came to him to the VALI of ARABIA. This general flattered them with the hopes of the prince's return; and when their importunities obliged him to march out of the town, he came back immediately without making any attempt, under the idle pretext, that his astrologers declared that the hour was not favourable. Whether the besieged saw into his artifices, or the fear of starving prevailed over their obedience, they grew tired of these evasions; and in the beginning of JULY assembled in a tumultuous manner, demanding with loud cries that SHAH HUSSEIN should come forth, and lead them against the enemy.

This prince, who had been so cowardly as to shut himself up in the seraglio since the beginning of the siege, was far from yielding to such a proposal. He ordered some of his officers to let them know, that he would give his answer the next day; but the populace insisting that he should appear himself, the eunuchs dispersed them by firing some musquet shots from the palace. So extraordinary a behaviour, under such circumstances, might have occasioned a general insurrection, if ACHMED

AGA,

ZAIRIS and INSARIOTS in TURKEY. It was established by ABAS the GREAT, and consisted of persons chosen among the nobility, to whom he gave lands, on condition of their leading a certain number of their vassals into the field, when the sovereign should have occasion for them. This body, which amounted at that time to 300,000 men, was the last resort in any extremity or sudden danger; but as these employments were hereditary, and, under the late reigns, very little care had been taken to oblige the holders of these possessions to discharge their duty, they no longer looked upon them in any other light, than as legal estates. Of this a very melancholy experiment was made on the present occasion.

1722. AGA, governor of ISFAHAN, had not prevented the ill consequences of it. This gallant eunuch put himself at the head of a body of veteran troops, and joining as many of the people as offered themselves, he marched out of the town at the head of near thirty thousand men, who were soon followed by the VALI of ARABIA and his ARABS.

As soon as they got out of the gates, they fell with great impetuosity on one of the principal posts belonging to the enemy ; the troops which guarded it were obliged to give way to numbers ; and tho' part of the rebel army came immediately to their assistance, yet ACHMED AGA would have maintained his ground, if the VALI had not deserted him. ACHMED, provoked at so infamous a behaviour, could not dissemble his resentment. He ordered his men to fire on the ARABIANS ; and at the same time gave directions to TÆHMAS KHAN, one of his principal officers, to attack them. This division flung the troops into disorder ; which the AFGHANS perceiving, charged them with new vigour, so that the PERSIANS being almost hemmed in, were obliged at length to abandon the post, and retire under their ramparts.

The intent of this folly was to open a passage for the convoy above-mentioned, which in all probability would have been followed with the raising of the siege. ACHMED, who had formed the project, spared no pains to render it successful ; but neither his valour nor conduct could screen him from the displeasure of the king, who seemed to have so little discernment, as to shew no resentment against any but those who were faithful to him. This monarch was so infatuated by the artful discourse of the VALI of ARABIA, as to impute the misfortune intirely to ACHMED AGA : he blamed him openly for fighting in compliance with the importunity of the people, and without orders from the general : but above all, he condemned him for firing upon the ARABIANS : and refusing to give ear to what he had to alledge in proof of his innocence, much less to give him an opportunity of proving the perfidy of the ARABIAN prince, he took the government of the city from him. The faithful ACHMED could not survive this disgrace, together with the approaching ruin of his country. Whether he took poison the night following, or
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grief

grief overwhelmed him, he died a few days after; and the king too late 1722. regretted the loss of a man, whose distinguished zeal, bravery, and experience, might have saved his diadem.

C H A P. XXI.

Consternation in ISFAHAN. Treachery of MELUCK MAGHMUD governor of SEGESTAN, who makes himself master of KHORASAN. Description of the famine in ISFAHAN. Capitulation for the surrender of that city. Ceremony of SHAH HUSSEIN's abdication. MIR MAGHMUD receives the diadem, and takes possession of ISFAHAN.

THE death of ACHMED caused as much joy in the camp of the AFGHANS, as consternation in ISFAHAN. All hopes of succours were now vanished; and, to complete their misery, even the flesh of horses and other beasts of burthen was become very scarce. The besieged, thus pressed by famine, deserted in crowds; and tho' the AFGHANS massacred every PERSIAN who fell into their hands, the desertion augmented^h. Whether ACHMED AGA had been the instrument of opening the eyes of the king, in regard to the VALI of ARABIA, or this monarch made an effort to change his fortune, by changing his general; he offered the command of the troops to LUTF ALI KHAN. This employment could not fall into better hands, if the choice had been made sooner; but things were reduced to the last extremity, most of the inhabitants having deserted in the manner related. A great number had perished for want, and the remainder, emaciated with hunger, had neither strength nor courage to make any desperate attempt; so that this lord not daring to rely upon them, and fearing if any mischance should happen, he should fall a victim to those secret artifices which had destroyed his brother-in-law the ATHEMAT DOULET, constantly refused every offer of that kind.

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^h About this time, father KRUSINSKI, the author of the memoirs, from whence part of this history is compiled, obtained leave to remove to JULFA. Two missionaries, of the same order, attempted to make their escape to SHIRASS, with the FRENCH consul: one of these fathers was killed, with some other EUROPEANS. The consul was wounded on this occasion; however he escaped, with several others of his little troop.

1722. The VALI of ARABIA was therefore left to carry on his treasonable practices; but SHAH HUSSEIN expecting no longer any succours from abroad, and despairing of the success of any attempt of his people within the walls, resolved to renew the negotiation, which the enemy had opened at the beginning of the siege. He sent the KURSHI BASHI to FARABAD, with orders to offer MAGHMUD the terms he had demanded; which were to give him one of the princesses his daughters in marriage, with 50,000 tomans¹, and to yield to him the provinces of KHORASAN, KHERMAN, and KANDAHAR, in full sovereignty. How advantageous soever these proposals appeared, MAGHMUD was too well acquainted with the situation of affairs, and rejected them with the same air of pride and disdain, as ALEXANDER once affected on a like occasion; the AFGHAN prince answered almost in the same terms as the GRECIAN hero: "The king of PERSIA," said he, "offers me nothing that is in his disposal; this prince, and the princesses are already in my power; he is no longer master of those three provinces, which he offers me; the fate of the whole empire is now to be decided between us."

Things were thus situated, when news came that MELUCK MAGHMUD, governor of SEGESTAN, was advancing by forced marches to the relief of the capital. The king, touched to the heart at the arrogance of the AFGHAN chief, imagined that heaven had stirred up an avenger of his cause. These deluding hopes were augmented, when he heard that this general, with 10,000 men under his command, was encamped at GULNABAD. This event flung the rebel chief once more into great inquietude. The siege had already cost him above 2000 men; and he could not pretend to be a match for this army, which was composed of regular troops, and for the forces within the gates, who would certainly make some desperate effort to relieve themselves. Under this anxiety, he thought it more adviseable to tempt the fidelity of his new enemy, than to expose himself to the hazard of an engagement with an officer, whose valour and military skill he had already experienced.

¹ 125,000*l*.

NAZR ULLA was therefore appointed to repair to GULNABAD, with such 1722. magnificent presents ^k, as rather betrayed the fear, than expressed the liberality of the donor. NAZR ULLA executed his commission like a man of abilities: he represented to MELUCK MAGHMUD, that the capital was reduced to the last extremity, and that the rest of the empire being attacked on every side, could not avoid its approaching ruin: he made him sensible of the uncertainty of the issue of a battle, and that the friendship of MIR MAGHMUD might, in the present circumstances, procure him advantages far superior to his present expectations: he then laid before him the articles of his commission, and offered him the alliance and assistance of the AFGHANS, if he inclined to accept the sovereignty of one of the provinces of the kingdom.

The magnificence of the presents had already dazzled the eyes of MELUCK MAGHMUD; the uncertainty of the issue of a battle also staggered him; but the ambition of reigning determined his compliance. He made KHORASAN his choice, with a view of being supported in case of need by the provinces of KANDAHAR and HERAT, which their common interest gave him sufficient reason to expect. Having therefore concluded the treaty, he set out on his march to take possession of his new dominions.

MESCHED, the capital of that country, which the policy of ABAS the GREAT had raised to so flourishing a condition, was greatly fallen from its former lustre. The ABDOLLEES and OUSBEGS, who made incursions in this neighbourhood, at length took it by storm, after a few days siege; and not satisfied with stripping it of the wealth which had been hoarded there by the superstition of the PERSIANS, the inhabitants felt the utmost effects of avarice and cruelty. ISMAEL KHAN, governor of the province, unable to oppose MELUCK MAGHMUD, took the resolution of retiring to CASBIN. Whether the ABDOLLEES and OUSBEGS had no further view than to pillage, and consequently had abandoned their conquest; or whether the thing was concerted with the AFGHAN prince, the new usurper was received in MESCHED the 20th of NOVEMBER, and the other cities of the

^k Seven horses magnificently caparisoned, saddles, bridles, a poniard enriched with diamonds, rich stuffs, and gold callyans.

1722. the province knowing he was a SCHIAS, made no difficulty to acknowledge him for their sovereign.

The joy which the approach of this general had occasioned in ISFAHAN, served only to heighten the forlorn condition to which they were reduced. The exorbitant pay of the military people, had exhausted the SHAH's treasure; so that the next expedient was to carry all the gold and silver plate in the palace, to the mint; and when this was all gone, the king borrowed considerable sums on his jewels, of different merchants, but especially of the ENGLISH and DUTCH¹. At length, the latter end of SEPTEMBER, when there was neither money nor provisions left, this unfortunate prince ordered his ministers to go and treat for a capitulation.

MAGHMUD might at this time have regulated the conditions as he pleased; but this dangerous rebel had further views. He foresaw that he could never be safe in ISFAHAN, so long as the inhabitants were greatly superior in number to his troops; for which reason he took his measures, that a considerable part of those who remained, might perish with hunger, before he signed the treaty. It is true, he might have destroyed them at once, by ordering a general assault, which, in their miserable condition, would have been the least act of cruelty; his chief officers pressed him to this for some time, giving for reason, that this action would not only facilitate the conquest of the rest of the empire, by the terror which it would spread in all parts; but moreover, that it would justify his invasion, since according to the law, there is no better title to a crown, than taking it by the sword. Whether he was afraid of losing part of his best troops, or intended to preserve from the greedy hands of his soldiers, the great riches of this so late flourishing a city, he lay still within his lines, during the last two months of the siege, amusing himself with the idea of his future grandeur; whilst the besieged flattered themselves with the hopes of an accommodation, which he never intended.

What heart can reflect without horror, on the dreadful circumstances of the famine, caused by this artful conduct! In the month of AUGUST, horses, mules, and other beasts of burthen, were become so excessive dear,

¹ The DUTCH alone lent him 340,000 crowns.

dear, that none but the king, and the principal lords about him, or some 1722.
of the wealthiest inhabitants, could afford to eat of them. Notwithstanding the aversion which the PERSIANS have from their religion for dogs, and some other animals, which they look upon as unclean, yet as many as they could find, were consumed in a few days: the people afterwards fed on the bark of trees, leaves, and leather, which they softened with boiling water; but when this sad resource was also exhausted, they had no other support than human flesh. Never was so much of it eaten in any siege as this. What pencil can describe their hollow eyes, their trembling knees, their emaciated bodies! Death, in his ghastly form, appeared in their livid countenances, whilst they were cutting slices of human bodies to support the feeble remains of life: some were even transported by the violence of hunger, to murder their fellow-citizens, or young children, to feast on their bodies. Under this lamentable necessity of perishing by famine, or of supporting themselves by means so contrary to nature, several poisoned themselves together with their whole family. The streets, the public squares, and the very gardens of the palace, were strewn with dead bodies, which no one had the heart or strength to bury. The water of the ZENDEROUD was so corrupted by the number of carcases thrown into it, that there was no possibility of drinking of it; and in a less wholesome climate^m, the air must have been infected to that degree, as to destroy what few inhabitants were left alive. Such was the miserable situation of this unhappy city for above two months. The ARMENIANS were received in JULFA, excepting such as had carried provisions to the enemy, contrary to the prohibition of MAGHMUD; but if any of the PERSIANS were so desperate as to go thither, they were sure to meet with death: neither age nor sex could protect them from the barbarity of the AFGHANS; the men were massacred, and the women and children thrown into wells.

The 21st of OCTOBER, SHAH HUSSEIN, clad in mourning, went out of his palace on foot, and walked thro' the principal streets of ISFAHAN. This unfortunate monarch bewailed aloud the misfortunes of his reign,

^m The air of ISFAHAN is remarkably rarified; it resembles much that of MADRID, as I was assured by a Jesuit, who lived many years in both cities.

1722. reign, imputing them to the bad counfels of his minfters; he endeavoured alfo to comfort the multitude that furrounded him, with the hopes of their meeting with a better fate, under a new government. This fpeech from a prince, whose gentlenefs of nature was the fault which had ever betrayed him, and by which he was now reduced to this ftate of humiliation, after a reign of eight and twenty years, could not but make a fenfible impreffion on the people, who in fpite of their own mifery, in the bitternefs of their fouls lamented the difgrace of their fovereign.

The king having thus taken his leave of his fubjects the 22d of OCTOBER, fent plenipotentiaries the day following, to fign the capitulation. By this act, he obliged himfelf to refign the empire to the conqueror, and to yield himfelf up into his hands, with the principal officers of his court. MAGHMUD on the other fide, promifed that no ill treatment fhould be offered, neither to the king, the nobility, nor any of the inhabitants. This treaty being figned, the day followingⁿ MAGHMUD fent horfes for the king and his court: this unfortunate prince having facrificed five camels^o, perhaps the only ones left, mounted on horfe-back, in company with about three hundred perfons, among whom were the VALI of ARABIA, the ATHEMAT DOULET, a brother of the VALI of LORISTAN, and the principal lords of the court; they moved on flowly, with their eyes fixed on the ground; the few inhabitants who had ftrength to fee this mournful cavalcade, expreffed their grief by a gloomy f Silence, which prefaged the bad effects of this melancholy event.

It was now paff noon, when two couriers arrived, to give notice to the grand mafter of the ceremonies of MAGHMUD's court, that the king was drawing near. Thefe officers immediately entered MAGHMUD's tent, who to humble the PERSIANS ftill more, difpatched the fame couriers back, with orders to the SHAH, to halt at the foot of a hill near the camp, under the pretence that MAGHMUD was afleep. Thus the unhappy HUSSEIN was treated with marks of fervitude, even before he had quitted the en-
figns

ⁿ The 23d of OCTOBER 1722, was the day on which this catastrophe happened. ^o They were killed without any ceremony; I do not know for what purpofe this facrifice was ordered; that of one camel, which feems to be prefcribed by the law, fhould have been made at MECCA, the 10th of the preceding moon.

signs of royalty; he tarried about half an hour at the place prescribed, and then obtaining leave to continue his march, he arrived at FARABAD, where the AFGHAN chief had his head quarters.

The grand master of the ceremonies introduced him into a hall, at the corner^p of which MAGHMUD was seated, leaning on a cushion of cloth of gold. The king advancing towards the middle of the chamber, saluted him, saying, SELAM ALEIOCOM^q. The AFGHAN then rose up, and returned the salute, with the same compliment; after which, the ATHEMAT DOULET conducted the king to another corner, on the left of MAGHMUD, where a place was prepared for him, like that which was occupied by this rebel prince.

The king being seated, opened the conversation by saying: "Son, since the great sovereign of the world is no longer pleased that I should reign, and the moment is come which he has pointed out for thee to ascend the throne of PERSIA, I resign the empire to thee with all my heart: I wish that thou mayst rule it in all prosperity." At the same time he took the royal plume of feathers^r from his turbant, and gave it to MAGHMUD's grand vizir; but this prince refusing to receive it from the vizir, the king stood up, and taking it again, fastened it himself to the usurper's turbant, saying, "reign in peace;" after which he retired, and sat down in his place. MAGHMUD continued sitting, while HUSSEIN was fixing this mark of sovereignty on his turbant. Coffee and tea were afterwards served up; and the AFGHAN prince, taking these liquors, addressed himself to the king after this manner: "Such is the instability of human grandeur: God disposes of empires as he pleases, and takes them from one nation to give them to another: but I promise to consider you always as my own father; and I will undertake nothing for the future without your advice." After these words, HUSSEIN was invited

^p The corner is the most honourable place in ORIENTAL countries. It is also the most commodious, as it is the only one in which a person can lean on both sides on the cushions, which are placed round the walls.

^q All hail: this compliment is seldom given but to people of the same persuasion in religion; it is the highest expression of respect.

^r This plume of feathers is called the GIGA, and is the mark of sovereignty. See Vol. IV. page 4.

1722. vited into another apartment, which had been appointed for him; and 4000 AFGHANS were ordered to take possession of the royal palace, and of the gates of the city.

Thus the reign of the SEFFIES, after having lasted 223 years, ended at length in the person of SHAH HUSSEIN*, the tenth successor of ISMAEL the first king, and founder of this dynasty.

* We may with propriety say it ended, since his son TÆHMAS was too weak or too unfortunate to re-establish it.

P A R T VI.
THE
REVOLUTIONS OF PERSIA,
FROM THE
ACCESSION OF MAGHMUD TO THE
CROWN OF PERSIA IN 1722,
TO THE
TREATY CONCLUDED BETWEEN SHAH TÆHMAS
AND PETER THE GREAT IN 1723.

C H A P. XXII.

ASHREFF quits MAGHMUD's army. MAGHMUD ascends the throne, and receives the homage of SHAH HUSSEIN, and the grandees of PERSIA. He regulates the civil administration. TÆHMAS MYRZA takes the title of king. MAGHMUD orders new levies to be raised in KANDAHAR. He sends NAZR ULLA, with a detachment of troops, to lay siege to CASBIN. TÆHMAS retires upon the approach of the AFGHAN army. CASBIN surrenders.

THE tranquillity of the new reign was disturbed by a sudden event. 1722. ASHREFF SULTAN had not forgot the danger to which the escape of TÆHMAS MYRZA had exposed him ; but continued apprehensive lest that very protection which had saved him, should be imputed to him as a new crime, by a prince who was upon the point of being absolute master. As soon therefore as this AFGHAN prince received notice

1722, that SHAH HUSSEIN had submitted, he deserted his post, designing to retreat to KANDAHAR, under an escort of an hundred chosen horse. MAGHMUD, sensible of the consequence of such a desertion, sent NAZR ULLA in pursuit of him with five hundred horse: this general made such haste, that he overtook him at VERSENE, a village twenty leagues distant, from whence he brought him back to the camp. MAGHMUD had meditated his destruction, but he escaped the second time. He was really more beloved by the soldiers, than MAGHMUD himself, and they talked openly of retiring to KANDAHAR, if any attempt should be made to take away his life. MAGHMUD therefore thought it best to forgive him, at least to dissemble his resentment.

His thoughts were now employed in regard to the ceremony of ascending the throne, which had been just resigned to him. The 27th of the same month, was the day appointed for this solemnity. AMAN OLA posted centinels on the turrets, and other lofty edifices, to observe the motions of the people. The two kings marched out of the camp of the AFGHANS, and advanced towards the town. MAGHMUD, in order to shew himself to his new subjects, took his rout by the bridge of SHIRASS, so that he traversed the city to reach the palace.

The procession was opened by ten officers on horse-back, and about 2000 cavalry, among whom were several lords of the court of PERSIA. Next came the master of the horse to the AFGHAN prince, at the head of fifteen led horses magnificently caparisoned; he was followed by some musqueteers on foot, and these by 1000 common infantry. Immediately after came the grand master of the ceremonies, in the midst of 300 negroes dressed in scarlet cloth. These negroes had been chosen from among the slaves of ISFAHAN, to compose the conqueror's guard. Forty paces from thence was MAGHMUD, mounted on a horse^{*}, of which the VALI of ARABIA had made him a present, on the day of the abdication. The unfortunate HUSSEIN rode on his left side. These princes were followed by about 300 pages on horse-back. The MUFTI^u, and AMAN OLA^w, whom MAGHMUD had appointed his grand vizir; MULLAH SAF-FRAN,

^{*} It is said that this horse cost 4000 crowns.

^u The judge who decides on points of law.

^w He is also called AMAN OLA KHAN, tho' his title of KHAN has not been observed.

FRAN^x, and NAZR ULLA^y, one of his generals; MOULA MOUSSA his high treasurer, and MAHOMMED AGA steward of his household, succeeded next; after these came the ATHEMAT DOULET, and the principal officers of the dethroned monarch, mixed with the crowd of AFGHAN officers. The whole was closed by 100 camels, each loaded with one of the harquebuses already mentioned, preceded by 600 musicians, and followed by near 6000 horse. 1722.

As soon as they had passed over the bridge of SHIRASS, SHAH HUSSEIN was conducted cross the gardens of the palace, to the place of his confinement. MAGHMUD seemed to think it impolitic to lead the conquer'd king in triumph, but continued his march, and soon arrived at the gates of the town. The inhabitants, notwithstanding their grief, felt a relief from their misery, in this change, in hopes of supporting their lives; which induced them to give some external marks of respect to their new master. They laid rich stuffs under his horses feet, and filled the air with perfumes. The guns on the camels backs were often fired, as they marched along; and in the intervals, the ten AFGHANS who walked at the head of the procession, pronounced loud imprecations against the followers of ALI.

In this order the new monarch came to the royal palace^z; having seated himself on the throne, he was saluted the second time, as king of PERSIA, by the captive HUSSEIN, who was brought here for that purpose; after which he received the oath of allegiance, of the princes, ministers, grandees, chief officers, and principal citizens. Soon after, the artillery of the town and citadel proclaimed the news to the people; and the ceremony concluded with an entertainment, which the SULTAN^a, for so he was afterwards called, gave to the deputies who came in the name of all the citizens, to acknowledge his authority.

Notwithstanding this great change of fortune, MAGHMUD did not forget himself; for it may be truly said, that in the beginning he ruled like

^x This was MAGHMUD's chief ecclesiastic.

^y NAZR ULLA was also denominated NAZR

ULLA SULTAN.

^z DEVLET KANE, the habitation of greatness.

^a SHAH HUSSEIN

was also called SULTAN, which seemed to be an additional mark of honour, but SHAH is the proper title of the PERSIAN kings. This prince was frequently stiled SHAH SULTAN HUSSEIN, a writing which I have adopted.

1722. a prince born to the throne. As the most pressing business was now to put a stop to the dreadful famine, which was still consuming the few inhabitants, he gave proper orders for a supply of provisions; these were so punctually obeyed, that the very day he made his entrance, a batman^b of bread cost only one crown, which the day before was hardly to be had at any price. He then applied himself to the regulation of public affairs, in which he displayed the abilities of a consummate statesman. It was equally dangerous to commit the several subordinate branches of the administration to his own officers; or to continue them in the hands of the ministers of the late sovereign; for he could no more expect experience from the one, than fidelity from the other. MAGHMUD was sensible of this inconvenience; he therefore confirmed the PERSIANS in their employments, but associated with each of them a colleague of his own nation.

By this piece of policy, he not only formed ministers to his liking, but likewise prevented the jealousy and aversion, which his new subjects would have conceived, from his discarding the old ministry. He left no other post than that of DIVAN BEGHI, entirely to an AFGHAN; presuming that good sense and equity, were sufficient for the discharge of the duties of this office. Whatever was his motive, he had no reason to repent of his choice; for the PERSIANS themselves were soon astonished, to see justice administered with more rectitude and integrity by a foreign nation, than it had been during the reign of their natural sovereign^c. The people were screened from violence by the severest prohibitions; and the safety of the conquerors was provided for by the strictest discipline. So prudent a conduct, insensibly diminished the consternation of the inhabitants, which was at length entirely removed, by punishing the treason of those who had been instrumental to his conquest, verifying that common observation, that we hate the traitor, tho' the treason may be convenient.

MAGHMUD ordered all those to be arrested, who, contrary to the allegiance due to their sovereign, had maintained a correspondence with the AFGHANS

^b 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds ENGLISH for five shillings.

^c This might well be under such a reign as that of HUSSEIN, for it might be emphatically said of it, "Woe be to thee, O land, whose king is a child, and whose princes eat in the morning."

GHANS during the siege. They were all executed as guilty of high treason ; 1722.
 their memory was branded with infamy ; their estates were confiscated, and
 their bodies exposed in the public market place. The VALI of ARABIA,
 though the most criminal, was the only one who was not put to death.
 It was imagined, that MAGHMUD had made an oath never to take away
 his life ; but perhaps he was afraid of provoking the ARABS by the death
 of their chief ; however his villainy did not escape with impunity, for
 MAGHMUD confiscated his estate, and condemned him to perpetual im-
 prisonment. His hereditary principality, which was that of CHUSISTAN^d,
 was given to one of his cousin-germans, who had served in the rebel
 army ; and MAGHMUD engaged to put him in possession of it, as soon as
 the situation of his affairs would permit. The manner in which he be-
 haved to the late ATHEMAT DOULET, was not less agreeable to the PER-
 SIANS. This minister had the courage to put a restriction on the oath of
 allegiance, which he swore to the new sovereign, by begging to be ex-
 cused from ever bearing arms against prince TÆHMAS. MAGHMUD car-
 ried his policy on this occasion so far, as publicly to commend the gene-
 rous behaviour of that minister ; and even affected to shew him a par-
 ticular esteem and confidence on that very account.

The PERSIANS were not the only people who had reason to commend
 the beginning of the new reign ; the consuls of EUROPEAN nations were
 confirmed in their privileges ; and the missionaries obtained the free ex-
 ercise of their religion in their churches in ISFAHAN and JULFA. Such
 appearances of equity in a prince, who had been hitherto considered
 only as a chief of banditti, drew part of the inhabitants to town, who had
 fled for shelter to the country. SHAH HUSSEIN was almost the only per-
 son in the empire, who had any occasion to complain. MAGHMUD took
 from him a great number of young women slaves, who composed his
 harram, and distributed them among his principal officers. This mo-
 narch had carried his sensuality to such a height, as to render all his
 subjects tributary to his pleasures ; the influence of his eunuchs, which
 was the ruin of the empire, arose from his boundless gratifications. How-
 ever,

^d Is the antient SUSIANA. The ARABS call this province after the name of its capital AHOUAS.
 It borders upon the PERSIAN gulph, and the banks of the EUPHRATES.

1722. ever, he was now reduced to the company of five of his women, and five domestics. The princes of the blood were shut up in another quarter of the palace, and guarded in the same manner as himself, by a hundred men. MAGHMUD, to all appearance, acted thus from a spirit of œconomy; for in other respects he shewed a great regard for this prince, consulting him on every occasion, and omitting nothing in his power that might sooth his misfortunes. SHAH HUSSEIN, before his abdication, had married one of his daughters to the SEDR^e: the new sultan followed this example, and gave away the eldest of the remaining princesses in marriage to his MUFTI; and was married himself to the youngest with great solemnity. This respectful behaviour, joined to the necessity of obeying, induced the dethroned monarch at length to write a circular letter, by which he ratified his abdication, and enjoined all the inhabitants, both in town and country, to acknowledge the victor's authority.

During these transactions, TÆHMAS MYRZA, who was at CASBIN, having heard of the surrender of ISFAHAN, and the cession of the crown, took the title of SHAH, and was acknowledged as such by the provinces that continued true to their allegiance. This step served as a pretext to gratify the avarice of MAGHMUD; for he no sooner heard of it, than he demanded 120,000 tomans^f of the city, to defray the expences of the war. At the same time he laid a tax of 20,000 tomans^g on the king's first physician: this man had been for a long time his master's chief favourite, and was justly charged with having made no other use of his credit, than to hoard up immense riches, and to destroy the prime minister FATEY ALI KHAN, by an artifice, which occasioned, as we have related, the total subversion of the state. As these circumstances had rendered him odious to his nation, the AFGHANS made no scruple of treating him with the utmost rigour. His treasure, and the sum which ISFAHAN was obliged to raise, having been carried to the prince's coffers, the great treasurer, MOULA MOUSSAH, received orders to repair to KANDAHAR, and to employ these sums in making new levies: accordingly he set out soon after. MAGHMUD hearing that CASBIN was one of those cities

^e SEDR AL SCHERIAH, chief justice. The TURKS call this officer MUFTI, and the AFGHANS MIANGI.

^f 300,000 l.

^g 50,000 l.

cities which had acknowledged prince TÆHMAS, he turned his thoughts that way. It is pretended that his design was to yield this city and its dependencies in full sovereignty to AMAN OLA, as an equivalent for the throne and treasures of SHAH HUSSEIN; which, according to their original compact, he ought to have shared with him. MAGHMUD now entrusted this general with a detachment of 6000 AFGHANS, and 4000 foreign troops; ASHREFF and NAZR ULLA having joined this little army, they marched from ISFAHAN towards the end of NOVEMBER. 1722.

TÆHMAS, presuming that the AFGHANS would not open the campaign at the latter end of autumn, when the weather is pretty severe in those parts, had, by the advice of his prime minister, put his troops into quarters: he was therefore in no capacity of making head against the enemy. As soon as he heard of their approach, he withdrew to ZENGAN, and from thence to TAVRIS, but in no circumstances suitable to the dignity of a sovereign. The cities of CASHAN, KOOM, and KIARE, which lay in the direct road, sent deputies to meet AMAN OLA, and to ransom themselves from pillage. This general encamped the 20th of DECEMBER within three leagues of CASBIN. As soon as the inhabitants knew that the AFGAHNS were arrived within their district, they sent deputies to meet them. AMAN OLA was conducted into the city with the sound of drums, and other military instruments. He took up his quarters, with great part of his army, in the palace^h, whilst the rest of the troops were lodged in the houses of the citizens.

The joy which this news occasioned at MAGHMUD's court, was allayed by another piece of intelligence, which came soon after. MOULA MOUSSA, who was commissioned to convoy the treasure to KANADHAR, had entered the province of SEGESTAN without any opposition; but MYRZA ISMAEL, governor of BANDAⁱ, having attacked him on his march, MOUSSA and his convoy were put to flight, and obliged to abandon the treasure. It is affirmed that the money amounted to 150,000 tomans^k.

^h See Vol. I. page 231. ⁱ A strong fortress in that province. which some historians report to have been sent to SHAH TÆHMAS by ISMAEL.

^k 175,000 l.

C H A P. XXIII.

PETER the GREAT invades the northern provinces of PERSIA. Operations of the RUSSIAN army. PERSIA threatened by the TURKS. The inhabitants of CASBIN take up arms, and drive away the AFGHANS. Artful behaviour of MAGHMUD upon that occasion.

1722. **M**AGHMUD was not the only formidable enemy, that appeared in arms against the crown of PERSIA. PETER the GREAT being convinced that commerce is the only source of riches, and consequently the basis of the splendor of a state, designed to open a communication between the CASPIAN and EUXINE seas, by joining the VOLGA and the DON¹; as he had already opened a communication by a canal, between the VOLGA and the NEVA, which communicates with the BALTIC; by this means he had rendered ST. PETERSBURG, on the side of EUROPE, what ASTRACHAN was on the side of ASIA. As he was sensible, that the commerce of ASIA could not be conveniently carried on but by the CASPIAN sea, he ordered a chart of it to be made; he likewise sent prince BECKAWITZ^m into TARTARY, where he was barbarously murdered. The cruelty with which the OUSBEGS massacred a whole caravan coming from CHINA in 1721, having revived the memory of this unhappy catastrophe, and of the outrages committed against the RUSSIAN merchants at the taking of SHAMAKIEⁿ; the RUSSIAN emperor was induced to send an ambassador into PERSIA. This minister was commissioned to make his complaints to SHAH HUSSEIN, if this prince was still upon the throne, concerning what had passed in SHIRVAN; and if he no longer reigned, to insist upon the usurper's giving satisfaction for the behaviour of the LESGEES, the OUSBEGS, and his other allies.

It is very probable, that the real motive of the embassy was to examine the situation of the affairs of that kingdom, of which the RUSSIAN court had received but imperfect accounts. MAGHMUD, to whom the RUSSIAN

¹ See Vol. I. page 99.
See page 93.

^m See his history, Vol. I. chap. 29.

ⁿ By the LESGEES.

SIAN minister addressed himself, made answer, " That he was desirous 1722.
 " of living upon good terms with the CZAR, whom fame had represented
 " as a wise and warlike prince; but as the people he complained of were
 " neither his allies nor subjects, he could not prescribe laws to them, nor
 " be accountable for their conduct. He therefore recommended to him,
 " to provide for the security of the caravans henceforwards by strong
 " convoys, unless he chose to enter into an alliance with those nations,
 " through whose territories they were to pass."

The CZAR was not satisfied with this answer; the opportunity was favourable to make himself master of the western shore of the CASPIAN. For this purpose, he assembled in the neighbourhood of ASTRACHAN, an army of 30,000 men, composed of those veterans who had served in the war with SWEDEN; these were joined by a body of TARTARS, COSSACKS, and KHALMUCKS. The 29th of JULY, he embarked on the CASPIAN, and anchored the 4th of AUGUST at the mouth of the river of TERKI, on the frontiers of DAGHESTAN. From thence a lieutenant was dispatched to TARKU, with orders to deliver to ALDI GHERAI, one of the princes of the LESGEES, a manifesto, in which the CZAR pretended, according to the ordinary stile of such writings, " That it was not any ambitious view of
 " enlarging his dominions that brought him thither; but an intent to
 " rescue the king of PERSIA, and his loyal subjects, from the tyranny of
 " the AFGHANS; and to chastise those rebels, for the disorders and excesses
 " which they had committed against the RUSSIANS: he concluded, with
 " threatening severe punishments against those who should persist in their
 " rebellion." These manifestos were also sent to DERBEND, SHAMAKIE, and BAKU.

During these transactions, a brigadier, who had been detached with a body of 6000 horse to take possession of ANDREOF, was attacked by 5000 of the inhabitants of that place; but he gave them so warm a reception, that he drove them back into the town, which was soon abandoned to pillage. The tenth of AUGUST the fleet landed the infantry at AHRAHIN near SULACK, where they threw up some entrenchments to cover themselves:

1722. here the SHAMKALL ALDI GHERAI, the lords of GORSKI and AXAN, and the sultan of a district, whose name was MAHOMMED, were presented to the CZAR. ALDI GHERAI received the RUSSIANS into TARKU: the end of the month the army resumed their march, passed the rivers MANAS, AHCHY, and BOYNAK, and encamped on the borders of the NITZI. The SULTAN MAHOMMED opposed their march with a body of 10,000 men; but after a sharp encounter, his troops were put to flight.

The first of SEPTEMBER the army encamped on the banks of the BUHAN, where they received intelligence, that the inhabitants of BAKU earnestly desired the protection of the CZAR against the insults of the LESGEES, who had vexed them with inroads for two years. As the army drew near to DERBEND^o, the governor marched out of the town, followed by the principal inhabitants, and presented the keys to the RUSSIAN monarch. This prince was received with the sound of a numerous artillery, and the acclamations of the people. Passing thro' the town, he encamped at a small distance from the walls, on the south side. The situation of this place, I have already observed, is such as constitutes it the gate into ASIA. After this conquest, he resolved to return home: having therefore confirmed the governor^p in his office, and left a garrison of two thousand RUSSIANS in the citadel, he ordered part of his troops to march back: of these, some were re-imbarked, and others went by land to ASTRACHAN; those remaining being sufficient to extend his conquest the next year: he arrived himself in that city by sea the middle of OCTOBER.

While the RUSSIANS were making themselves masters of the northern provinces of PERSIA, this unhappy empire saw a new storm impending towards the west. The port having been informed by SHAH HUSSEIN's own embassador, of the extremity to which his master was reduced, thought of reaping some advantage by his misfortunes. The opportunity was favourable, as she was secured against her ancient enemy by the treaty of PASSAROWITZ^q. The spirit of faction, which generally pre-

cedes

^p DERBEND, in the PERSIAN language, signifies a strong fortification; as in TURKISH, DEMIR CAPI, by which name they call this place, is a gate of iron.

^o The city is considered as

distinct from the citadel, in the latter a RUSSIAN officer commanded.

^q Concluded the 21st

of JULY 1718 with the emperor CHARLES VI.

cedes the subversion of monarchies, had diffused itself from ISFAHAN into 1722. the western provinces; so that the TURKS had all reason to expect that they might extend their conquest with a rapid progress. Things being thus situated, the PERSIAN minister was ordered to depart from CONSTANTINOPLE in the month of APRIL; and the grand vizir turned his whole attention to improve these favourable circumstances to the advantage of the OTTOMAN empire. Such were the different motions of these powers to the end of this year.

We shall now see what was transacting in the center of PERSIA during the course of the ensuing year. The city of CASBIN had no reason to be long pleased with the change of government; for AMAN OLA was hardly master of the place, when his insatiable avarice prompted him to treat the inhabitants with all the rigour which MAGHMUD generally shewed to conquered cities. These extortions, and the unbridled licentiousness of the soldiery, soon alienated the minds of the people. The yoke growing more intolerable every day, the leading men among them assembled privately, to consult on the means of delivering themselves from this oppressive tyranny. It was resolved, that part of the inhabitants should attack the royal palace at an hour appointed, while the rest were to fall sword in hand upon the AFGHANS dispersed in different quarters of the town; and to the end that their signal might cause no alarm, it was agreed to strike the first blow at the sound of the horn, which they make use of a little after sun-set, to give the people notice that the baths are ready.

The eighth of JANUARY was the day fixed for putting their design in 1723. execution. The conspirators had made all the necessary dispositions, and were waiting only for the critical moment of taking their full revenge; when some suspicious appearances determined them to anticipate the time. They had perceived early in the afternoon, that the AFGHANS abandoned some of their posts, and took possession of others; and that they were assembling in a body, in a manner which seemed to express the fear of danger. Upon this the conspirators took to their arms with great precipitation, and, without waiting for any other signal, fell upon the enemy on every side with the utmost fury.

AMAN

1723. AMAN OLA, alarmed at the report of musquets, mounted on horseback, and hurried away to the great square, whither the common danger had brought most of the AFGHANS together. Both parties were equally animated with the spirit of hatred and revenge, which rendered the victory for some time dubious. AMAN OLA, though wounded in the right shoulder by a musquet ball, continued to encourage his troops by his example; but seeing them in danger of being overpowered by numbers, he was obliged at length to retreat to the palace, where not thinking himself secure, he went thro' the gardens by a private way, and got out of the reach of the enemy. The AFGHANS lost 1600 men in this action; their flight was so precipitate, that they left all their baggage and treasure behind them, and their slaves recovered their liberty.

No sooner did this melancholy news reach the ear of MAGHMUD, by an express messenger from AMAN OLA; than this prince resolved upon an expedient, to prevent an insurrection in ISFAHAN. He ordered the guns to be fired, giving out that his general had taken TÆHMAS MYRZA prisoner; and to confirm this report, he caused illuminations and other public rejoicings to be made, which served as a pretext to double the guards, and to hinder any stranger from entering the city. This piece of policy could not be exerted upon a more proper occasion; for as the sending away the detachment under AMAN OLA had considerably weakened the army, there was room to apprehend, that the people of ISFAHAN, upon being informed of what had passed, might attempt to follow the example of the inhabitants of CASBIN.

C H A P.

C H A P. XXIV.

MAGHMUD orders the PERSIAN ministers and lords to be massacred. Arrival of a TURKISH envoy. ISFAHAN is almost depopulated. Excursions of NAZR ULLA. Heavy contributions laid upon the EUROPEAN traders.

THE great uneasiness which the affair of CASBIN had created in the 1723.
mind of MAGHMUD, was in some measure removed a few days after, by the return of the detachment under AMAN OLA. But how different was their appearance! When they set out upon the expedition, their numbers, their spirit, their intrepid countenance seemed to promise new victories; but the excessive cold, against which they were not provided, and the wounds which numbers of them had received, had rendered them rather objects of compassion than fear. The misery and hardships they had endured, destroyed many of them on the road, and the remainder were harrassed by their march, and dispirited by their defeat.

ASHREFF, upon leaving CASBIN, had taken the road to KANDAHAR with 300 horse, from an apprehension that this insurrection would be followed by a general revolt; or from a desire of freeing himself from the danger, to which the jealousy of MAGHMUD continually exposed him; so that this army, by no means appeared the same, as that which had left ISFAHAN two months before.

MAGHMUD now resolved on a project which he had been meditating for some time. The insurrection of CASBIN made such an impression on him, that he thought himself in great danger in the midst of a numerous and disaffected multitude, with only a handful of soldiers about him. The ordinary suggestion of his cruel mind under these circumstances was that of murder; for by putting one part of them to death, he hoped to remain more absolute master of the other. To prevent this barbarous expedient from causing the very insurrection which he apprehended, he determined to begin with those, whose credit, rank, or birth, might enable them to form or support a faction. With this intent, the very same day that AMAN OLA arrived, he invited the ministers, lords, and other PER-

SIAN

1723. SIAN chiefs, to a public entertainment. They came without any mistrust, to the number of three hundred ; but as soon as they were seated, his guard fell upon them with their sabres, and barbarously murdered them.

Among these victims to his infernal policy, were the great chancellor of the empire, the governor of ISFAHAN and his younger brother, both of them brothers of MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN, prince of GEORGIA; the KHAN of COKHILAN, the grand master of the artillery, and most of the principal persons of note belonging to the court of HUSSEIN. The ATHEMAT DOULET was spared, in consideration of his brother's having facilitated the escape of the AFGHANS at the affair of CASBIN. The horror of this cruel execution, was increased by the circumstance attending the murder of a boy of twelve years of age. He was son to ROSTAM MYRZA prince of GEORGIA, and as he had been adopted by an AFGHAN, he fled for shelter during the massacre to the officers of that nation, whose protection he implored with tears; but neither his tender years, nor the solicitations of the officers could save him: he was torn from them and butchered.

The bodies of those that were massacred, were exposed on the MEIDAN before the palace. To prevent their posterity from rising up in revenge, MAGHMUD gave orders for all their children also to be murdered. The impious manner in which he relieved his dastardly fears of these children, was yet more shocking. Two hundred young persons of the first nobility of PERSIA and GEORGIA, were led together from the academy where they were educated, to an open field; and being there permitted to run for their lives, the AFGHANS galloped after them, and enjoyed the horrible sport of chasing them like savage beasts, till they were all slaughtered. MAGHMUD, whose design was to secure the throne by the total extirpation of the nobility, to colour so flagitious a conduct, pretended that these young lords had formed a conspiracy against his life. His barbarous policy did not stop here: he had picked out of SHAH HUSSEIN's guards, and other troops belonging to that prince, near 3000 men, and taken them into his pay. These he assembled in an area within the palace, under the pretence of giving them an extraordinary allowance of PLEO; and while they were eating

it, a body of troops, which had been posted there for that purpose, 1723. fell upon them, and cut them to pieces, before they had time to recover themselves.

MAGHMUD now imagined he might, without any disguise, securely destroy such as were objects of jealousy. Accordingly he gave general orders to his soldiers, to put every one to the sword, who had at any time received pay from the exchequer, either by way of salary, or pension. As the enquiry was committed to the soldiers, who were constituted in a great measure the judges of the sentence which they were to execute, the intentions of their chief were extremely well answered; for during the fifteen days this massacre lasted, the despondency of the people was arrived to such a pitch, that one might see a single man leading three or four PERSIANS to execution. It was impossible to render such a series of barbarities excusable. MAGHMUD however pretended that he had been informed the inhabitants of ISFAHAN, after the example of those of CASBIN, intended to rise up in arms, and to massacre all the AFGHANS. It is even believed, that he spared the lives of some PERSIANS of distinction, to give his conduct the air of justice, as if these had disclosed to him this pretended conspiracy.

The third day of this tragedy, OSMAN AGA, whom the BASHA of BAGDAT had dispatched into PERSIA by order of the grand signior, arrived at ISFAHAN. A detachment of two hundred men was assigned for his guard, with orders not to suffer any one to come into the palace where he was lodged. The subject of his commission is not known: MAGHMUD suspected from the discourse he had with him, that he was a spy, who, under the sanction of the law of nations, was come to pry into the state of affairs. This prince, who was naturally of a proud and violent temper, would have paid but little regard to this law, if his ministers had not represented the inconveniences which might attend the violation of it. He was therefore prevailed on, not only to dissemble his resentment, but also to permit that this TURKISH minister, in company with some AFGHANS who were appointed to watch him, should see SHAH HUSSEIN.

1723: The TURKS not knowing what was transacting at ISFAHAN, had sent OSMAN to this unfortunate prince; but he was ordered eighteen days after his arrival to depart. He had reason enough to think, that his presence had been disagreeable; for they searched both himself and his baggage twice at the city gates; and three miles from thence, upon visiting some chests which had not been opened in the town, two young PERSIAN women were dragged out of them, and stabbed upon the spot, as also some slaves of the same nation, who were disguised in a TURKISH dress, thinking to escape among the AGA's retinue.

MAGHMUD, in the mean time, used every endeavour to weaken the PERSIAN inhabitants of ISFAHAN. The blood which he had spilt, was not sufficient to remove his anxiety. He ordered a proclamation to be made, that whoever was inclined to quit the town, should be at liberty to retire; except a certain number of young PERSIANS whom he had chosen, in order to train them up to the manners and discipline of his own nation. In consequence of which, all those who were able to bear arms, and had not complied with the tacit orders implied in that permission, were secretly put to death.

The few inhabitants that were left in the city could give him no further umbrage; he therefore applied his thoughts to those in the open country. Encouraged by the insurrection at CASBIN, these were every where in arms against the rebels; especially the inhabitants of BEN ISFAHAN, who continued to signalize their hatred against the AFGHANS, so as to kill several of them at the very gates of the town, from whence they also carried off some pieces of cannon. The probable effect of such an example, was not the only circumstance that disturbed MAGHMUD. The provisions which he had caused to be brought into ISFAHAN were almost consumed; and as the insurrection of the open country hindered a fresh supply, the AFGHANS were in danger of being famished in their turn.

To remedy these inconveniencies, MAGHMUD gave orders to NAZR ULLA to take the field with a detachment of 3000 men. This general was repulsed at several of these little towns; however, he took some by storm, and

and obliged others to surrender ; so that at length he obtained a supply of 1723. provisions. Among other places KOOMSHA, a city situated fifteen leagues south of ISFAHAN, submitted to him. As this supply had been raised in a country ruined by the war, it was not sufficient to maintain the AFGHAN army for any length of time : MAGHMUD therefore gave NAZR ULLA a reinforcement of 1000 men, with orders to make an incursion into the northern parts of IRAC AGEMI. This general set out accordingly the 4th of APRIL, and directing his march thro' the deserts to the southward, the better to surprize the enemy, appeared suddenly in the neighbourhood of HAMADAN. The KHAN who was governor of that country marched out at the head of 3000 men to give him battle : but his troops were too raw to stand the fire of the AFGHANS, who, after putting them to flight, made three attempts to take the city by storm.

We have already observed, that the AFGHANS had neither patience nor skill to carry on a regular siege ; so that a single wall retarded their progress as much as the strongest bastion. NAZR ULLA being discouraged at the loss he had sustained in endeavouring to take the place, contented himself with ravaging the country. As things were situated, there was nothing difficult in this undertaking. The terror occasioned by this sudden incursion, and by the apprehensions of the cruelty of the AFGHANS, was so great, that wherever they turned their arms, they found the towns and villages deserted. It is mentioned as a matter of astonishment, that during the whole course of this expedition, none but the keeper of the king's studs in KHOUSISTAN, and the KHAN of HAMADAN, had the courage to oppose the rebels. The former indeed was more successful than this general ; for taking 2000 men with him, who were appointed to guard the king's horses, he attacked a party of the rebels, and carried off a considerable number of camels loaded with plunder.

This little army had therefore leisure and opportunity to pillage as much as they pleased ; after which NAZR ULLA, willing to fulfil his master's intentions, led them towards DERGHEZIN, a town situate within three days journey of HAMADAN, on the side of CASBIN. This town and its neighbourhood, are inhabited by people of the same sect as the AF-

1723. GHANS. It was the policy of ABAS I. to transport the inhabitants of conquered places from one country to another, with the view not only of preventing any danger from their disaffection, but likewise of depopulating the frontiers exposed to an enemy: this prince had removed these people from KOURDISTAN, to the territories of HAMADAN, about DERGHEZIN; where, according to their original custom, they lived the greatest part of the year in tents. This conformity of manners and religion, first gave the notion to NAZR ULLA of inviting them to ISFAHAN. He engaged their chiefs, and managed the affair so dexterously, that he persuaded them to agree to this new migration. It is probable the chiefs themselves might prefer the houses of the capital to their cottages and tents; but NAZR ULLA had soon reason to think, that this change was not agreed to with the unanimous consent of these people, for numbers of them, biaised by their affection for their own habitations, deserted, and returned home again.

While NAZR ULLA was ravaging this part of PERSIA, MAGHMUD did not act more humanely towards the people of ISFAHAN, not sparing even the foreigners, as the ENGLISH factors there experienced; for besides a considerable sum in money, he took a large value in cloth and stuffs. The DUTCH EAST-INDIA company's factors were treated more severely. The merchants of that nation had sold, during the famine, a great quantity of bad sugar at an excessive high price; and as the extravagant dearness of every kind of provision, had stripped even the wealthy of the greatest part of their money, the DUTCH laid out their whole capital, in purchasing at a very low rate the most valuable moveables and commodities in the city, as stuffs, silks, furs, jewels, &c. But they were at length obliged to refund; for MAGHMUD ordered their standard* to be beaten down; and compelled them to discover where they had concealed their wealth. They had found the means of remitting some part of their treasure at different times to BENDER ABASSI, yet the sum said to be extorted from them upon this occasion amounted to near 400,000 crowns*.

The

* A kind of ensign or banner, like that used on board of ships, which the consuls of EUROPEAN nations put up before their houses.

* 100,000 l.

The INDIANS, whom commercial views had induced to settle in ISFAHAN, were also taxed at the rate of 27,000 tomans[†]. After this MAGHMUD made a fresh attack upon the ARMENIANS of JULFA. We have already mentioned that they had given a bond payable at the termination of the siege, and that nine of their chiefs had been arrested as sureties for the engagement, which still amounted to 50,000 tomans. Whether it was thro' design or inability, these people had failed payment; but MAGHMUD sent for the principal of them, and caused the heads of three of the sureties to be cut off, among these was their CALENTAR or civil magistrate. After extorting some money from the rest through the terror of this execution, he at length permitted them to return home.

C H A P. XXV.

ZEBERDEST KHAN lays siege to GHIEZ, and takes it. The inhabitants of BEN ISFAHAN surrender by capitulation. NAZR ULLA returns with a considerable booty and provisions. A new colony of AFGHANS arrives from KANDAHAR. The VALI of GEORGIA deposed. NAZR ULLA is sent into FARSISTAN. MAGHMUD besieges GHULPAIGAN. TÆHMAS marches an army to raise the siege; his army defeated, and GHULPAIGAN[‡] taken. Resolution and unhappy fate of LUTF ALI KHAN.

IN the mean time MAGHMUD carried on the war with great vigour against the several towns situated in the neighbourhood of ISFAHAN. He had committed the care of subduing those places to ZEBERDEST KHAN, who was taken prisoner twenty years before by the AFGHANS, and had passed from the state of slavery, to one of the principal posts in their army. This officer maintained the reputation of bravery, by which he had made his fortune. Without amusing himself, as his predecessor had done, in ravaging the open country, or in plundering a few defenceless towns, he ventured towards the beginning of MAY to lay siege to GHIEZ, a fortress before which the AFGHANS had miscarried more than once. This

[†] 67,500 l.

[‡] This is a town near CASHAN.

1723. This place was situated within three leagues of ISFAHAN, upon an eminence which commands the country, and was esteemed very strong. The KHAN summoned the garrison to surrender; upon the governor's refusal, he sent some PERSEES to break open the gates with their hatchets. But the reception his men met, soon convinced him that he must proceed with greater precaution. He therefore resolved to undermine the walls, and open a subterraneous passage into the town. The work was directed by a PERSEE, whose profession was to dig wells: when it was completed, he ordered a detachment to make their way through it sword in hand. The besieged, astonished to see the enemy start up from under the ground, a thing of which they had no conception, no longer resisted. Most of them were put to the sword, and their wives and children carried into slavery. This conquest proved of great service to the AFGHANS, for it not only secured the neighbouring villages, but likewise contributed greatly to engage the inhabitants of BEN ISFAHAN to submit to their government.

It was against this town that ZEBERDEST KHAN turned his arms, after the taking of GHIEZ. We have already seen, how its inhabitants maintained the reputation, which they had acquired by the advantages gained over MAGHMUD and AMAN OLA: their example served to keep up the spirit of resistance in other neighbouring towns. Hitherto they had been deaf to every proposal made by the usurper, but their present circumstances began to render them more docile: they considered that prince TÆHMAS, whose name was hardly any longer mentioned, was not in a capacity to lend them assistance; that the taking of GHIEZ enabled the enemy to blockade them more conveniently; and as it was now impossible for them to support an independency, it would be exposing themselves to inevitable miseries to no purpose, to hold out any longer. These reflections inclined them to acquiesce to the solicitations of ZEBERDEST KHAN. On the other hand they were deterred by the apprehension that MAGHMUD might resent the treatment shewn to his brother and his other relations, with the several damages they had done him. The KHAN however dissipated their fears, by offering that the capitulation should be signed

signed by the principal officers of the army, who were to engage their 1723. honours for the strict execution of it. On these conditions, they submitted at length to the yoke of the usurper.

MAGHMUD soon justified their suspicions: he could not forgive the damages they had done him, nor their having several times endeavoured to persuade the inhabitants of ISFAHAN to deliver themselves by a general insurrection from the yoke under which they groaned. His intention was to engage them in some step, which would justify his breaking the capitulation, and serve as a pretext to his vengeance. He therefore endeavoured by means of some persons, who should feign a detestation of himself and his government, to persuade them to revolt; but these people were too wise or too virtuous to be caught in this snare. They were as religious observers of the oath they had taken to him, as of the allegiance they had sworn to their lawful sovereign; hence they seized those emissaries, and sent them to ISFAHAN in irons, that MAGHMUD might inflict what punishment he pleased upon them. This mark of fidelity at length reconciled him to them.

The return of NAZR ULLA, after an excursion of three months, afforded no less pleasure to MAGHMUD, than the reduction of those two places. The apprehension he had been under, that the city would be depopulated by a second famine, was intirely removed when he saw this general arrive safe in ISFAHAN, with a great number of camels loaded with provisions and booty; also with many thousand DERGHEZINS, who might be considered as a new colony, not subject to be suspected, but intirely agreeable to the AFGHANS.

Towards the end of JUNE appeared a second colony; this was a caravan of several thousand camels, which arrived from KANDAHAR. These succours were owing to the prudence of MAGHMUD, at the very beginning of his reign. After the defeat of MOULA MOUSSA by MYRZA ISMAEL, by which a great treasure was plundered, he sent MAHOMMED NISCHAN, his grand master of the ceremonies^w, with a fresh supply of money into that country, to make new levies: and as this prince perceived that his
soldiers

^w ESICK AGASSI.

1723. soldiers deserted in bodies, and that whole companies had returned home, from the desire of seeing their wives and children; he intrusted this officer with 8000 camels, to bring the families of those AFGHANS who were already in the army, as likewise of those whom he should enlist into the service. This precaution, together with the fame which he had acquired of having ascended the throne of PERSIA, rendered this caravan much more considerable than was expected.

MAGHMUD distributed part of the deserted houses and lands to the AFGHANS and DERGHEZINS * lately arrived; and finding that these colonies, tho' numerous, were not sufficient to re-people the town, he raised a new fund out of the last taxes, and put it into the hands of MAHOMMED NISCHAN, with orders to lay it out in raising 15000 men more, and to bring them from KANDAHAR with their families.

In the mean time SHAH TÆHMAS continued at TAVRIS, contriving means to recover his dominions; but gave no demonstration of a capacity equal to the part he had to act. His conduct was but a natural consequence of the manner in which he had been educated. According to the custom established by ABAS the GREAT, he was not permitted to go out of the seraglio, till the very day he was named successor to the throne. The same prince, by an effect of his jealousy, committed the education of the princes of the blood to eunuchs, whose principal care was to keep them in ignorance. TÆHMAS came so rude and unpolished out of their hands, that he was obliged to rely intirely upon the information and fidelity of the people about him. The severe manner in which he was educated, was moreover productive of another inconveniency. He was hardly released from the seraglio, when his favourite passions began to predominate. Thinking himself no longer accountable for his conduct, he abandoned himself intirely to his pleasures, which neither reason nor experience had instructed him how to regulate. To pursue the true objects of pleasure, as agreeable to the character of a prince, can only be the effect of wise instructions. What then could be expected from this heir of the PERSIAN diadem?

He

* Sometimes called DARGUZZIS.

He had already made one false step in discharging his army at CASBIN; 1723. and now he made another no less injurious to his interest. Soon after he was declared king, he sent a messenger to VACHTANGA, VALI OF GEORGIA, with orders to repair forthwith to TAVRIS, and pay him homage. A resentment of this prince's behaviour in refusing to march to the succour of ISFAHAN, or some false policy, occasioned this summons to be couched in terms, which only served to irritate a person who was naturally haughty, and very little inclined to obedience. The VALI provoked at this treatment, despised the orders; but foreseeing danger from the disaffection which the grandees of the country shewed to him; and having already fruitlessly attempted to subject his territories to RUSSIA, he now wrote to CONSTANTINOPLE, offering to pay the port annually twenty-four purses, by way of tribute, on condition they would maintain him in the possession of his government, and confirm the privileges which the kings of PERSIA had granted to the princes his predecessors, as well as to the nation in general.

The VALI had not time to execute this last project; for TÆHMAS deposed him in MARCH following, and nominated in his place, MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN, prince of CAKET, who was also descended from the antient kings of GEORGIA. The new VALI presented himself before TEFLIS not long after, in order to take possession of his government; but not having a force sufficient to contend with VACHTANGA, who, contrary to the advice of the grandees of the nation, had given arms to the people; he was obliged to return to his principality for succours. As soon as he arrived there, he assembled all the military people that could be found, and entered into a treaty with his neighbours the LESGEES, who supplied him with a body of 7000 men; the junction of these forces augmented his army so considerably, that on the 8th of MAY he appeared again before TEFLIS.

VACHTANGA foreseeing this storm, had already concerted his measures. Finding that the inhabitants began to treat him publicly as a rebel, and that he could no longer depend on their affection, he quitted the town privately the preceding night, and carried with him his family,

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and

* Towards the end of FEBRUARY.

723. and the great treasure which he had amassed during the course of a long reign. This proud GEORGIAN then felt the punishment of the mischiefs caused by his disobedience. Having wandered from place to place as a fugitive, in AUGUST 1725 he took refuge in ST. PETERSBURG; where, for reasons of state, and the connexion he had with the RUSSIAN court, he found a safe azylum. The new VALI meeting no longer with a competitor, made his entrance into TEFLIS. The grandees, and the inhabitants in general, were convinced of their former error, and received him with great demonstrations of joy. He had not been long with them, when he taxed them with 50,000 tomans⁷, part of which was paid immediately, and the remainder a few months after.

In this interval the AFGHAN army was increased by a body of 6000 DERGHEZINS, whom NAZR ULLA had collected before his return, and by a considerable number of TURKISH adventurers, whom MAGHMUD had taken into his pay, as likewise by the recruits arrived from KANDAHAR. This prince was now able to engage in some fresh enterprize, but apprehending that his absence might cause some troubles in the capital, he resolved to entrust the execution of his designs to the experience of NAZR ULLA. Thus the army was again divided into two bodies: this general having the most numerous under his command, received the SULTAN's directions to fall upon the province of FARSISTAN.

MAGHMUD was of too active a genius to be long idle: leaving a sufficient garrison in ISFAHAN, he led the remainder of his troops against GHULPAIGAN, a town situated in a plain westward of CASHAN. The inhabitants of this place were strongly attached to TÆHMAS's party, and had neglected no precaution necessary to enable them to hold out a long siege. MAGHMUD caused his cannon to be fired against the walls, and then commanded his troops to storm the town in three different places. The PERSIANS defended themselves with great resolution, but not without abandoning some of the works which they had thrown up.

Things were in this situation, when MAGHMUD received intelligence, that a new enemy had started up against him. The success which TÆHMAS had

had in reducing TEFLIS, raised the courage of that prince; he appointed 1723. FENDOUN, KHAN of the KOURDS, to command his troops; and having ordered the VALI's of LORISTAN and ARABIA, and the KHAN of COHKILAN to join that general with all the forces of their respective governments, he gave directions to him to march to ISFAHAN, and attack the usurper. FENDOUN KHAN was prevented from drawing any succours from those provinces, by the motion of the OTTOMAN armies; who having invaded GEORGIA, as we shall have occasion to mention more particularly, became masters of that country, and threatened the frontiers of PERSIA on every side. This general had however 8000 men under his command, all choice troops, which TÆHMAS had assembled in the neighbourhood of TAVRIS, and with which he might have rendered some service: but preferring plunder, he pillaged the quarter of the city where the ARMENIANS reside, under a pretence that these people favoured his master's enemies; and adding imposture to this act of villainy, he sent the heads of some of those who had been murdered on this occasion to the SHAH, as if they belonged to the AFGHANS killed in battle; but the fraud was easily discovered, as the heads of several ARMENIAN priests were known by the tonsure.

A general so little a friend to justice, seemed to promise no great success towards retrieving the affairs of the SHAH; however he determined to attack the enemy. He knew that MAGHMUD had marched out of ISFAHAN with only 10,000 men; and presumed with good reason that this army, already harrassed with the cold and continual rains, would not be able to withstand the joint attack of his troops and of the inhabitants of GHULPAIGAN. Flattered with this notion, he marched against the AFGHANS, but was soon put to flight, with the loss of 2000 of his forces. He then retired to his own country, whither he invited the TURKS, who, on condition of his fealty to them, left him in possession of his government.

TÆHMAS was thus punished for intrusting the command of his troops to a man, who had no military abilities; and whose fidelity he ought to have suspected, since he could not be ignorant that the KOURDS are of the

1723. same sect as the TURKS their neighbours. This event was followed with the loss of MACON. These new rebels having entered that place by surprize the very same year, put the garrison to the sword, and made themselves masters of that fortress, which in those countries is esteemed impregnable.

The loss of this battle was also attended with that of GHULPAIGAN. Some of the inhabitants endeavoured to throw themselves into a fort contiguous to the town, but MAGHMUD cut most of them to pieces. The remainder no sooner beheld a barbed elephant brought against their walls in order to make a breach, than they submitted to the conqueror.

The SULTAN having thus routed an army, taken a town, and obliged a fortress to surrender, returned triumphant to ISFAHAN. He then entrusted the command of his troops to ZEBERDEST KHAN, who not long after made himself master of HONSAR, a large town situate within five days journey north-west of the capital. Towards the end of DECEMBER this general marched against CASHAN, whose inhabitants, contrary to the allegiance they had sworn when AMAN OLA was upon his march towards CASBIN, had taken up arms in favour of prince TÆHMAS.

LUTF ALI KHAN, famous for the defeat he gave the rebels before KHERMAN, and afterwards for his disgrace at a time when he might have saved the empire, was not included in the massacre of the nobles already mentioned. MAGHMUD was desirous of gaining him over to his interest; and tho' this faithful subject had always avoided entering into any engagements prejudicial to his lawful sovereign; yet the SULTAN, hoping to win him, continued to load him with favours. LUTF ALI KHAN being thus esteemed and respected at court, might have spent his days in ease and tranquillity; but his loyalty would not permit him to be passive: he thought it his duty to serve TÆHMAS his lawful sovereign. With this view he waited a favourable opportunity, and made his escape from ISFAHAN, designing to join the SHAH in TAVRIS.

The flight of LUTF ALI KHAN, flung the AFGHANS into fresh apprehensions. They could not forget that this general, after the victory he had obtained

tained over them, was just upon the point of crushing them in their own 1723.
country. They knew that he was acquainted with their weak condition;
and should he put himself at the head of an army, which his reputation
might enable him to collect, it was hard to say what would be the conse-
quence. MAGHMUD caused diligent search to be made for him, and pro-
mised considerable rewards to those who should discover him. They had
not yet finished their enquiries, when the unfortunate LUTF ALI KHAN ap-
peared in sight. The people of BEN ISFAHAN having discovered him in their
town, brought him to the usurper. MAGHMUD no sooner approached
him, than forgetting his own dignity, he fell upon him like a mad-man,
and hewed him in pieces with his sabre. How greatly the tyrant stood
in fear of the virtues of this illustrious general, appeared by this barba-
rous and unprincely action; as well as by the privileges and favours,
with which he rewarded the zeal and affection of the inhabitants of BEN
ISFAHAN.

C H A P. XXVI.

*The TURKS send an army into GEORGIA. The CZAR subdues GHILAN.
Uneasiness of the OTTOMAN port at the progress of the RUSSIANS. TAH-
MAS sends an ambassador to the port, who miscarries in his negotiation.
ISMAEL BEG is sent ambassador to the court of RUSSIA, and concludes a
treaty with the CZAR. Particulars of this treaty.*

DURING these transactions in the interior parts of the PERSIAN
dominions; in the month of OCTOBER the preceding year, the
OTTOMAN court dispatched NISLI MAHOMMED AGA, as envoy to PETER
the GREAT. As he passed through CRIM TARTARY, the KHAN infor-
med him of the circumstances of this monarch's expedition into PERSIA.
He took the road to ASTRACHAN, where he expected to meet the em-
peror²; but hearing that this prince was set out for MOSCO, he changed his

² We use the word emperor and CZAR in common, the former is most proper, though the latter
is most familiar.

1723. his rout. NISLI MAHOMMED AGA had received a strict charge to make all possible expedition; but as soon as he arrived on the RUSSIAN territories, he was detained by the officer who commanded on that frontier, under a pretence that he could not permit him to proceed any further, without express orders from his court. This difficulty, which seemed to arise only from too scrupulous an exactness in the officer, was not removed till the CZAR received news from NEPLEUIFF his resident at CONSTANTINOPLE. This monarch being then informed of the dispositions of the port, commissioned one of his officers to receive the TURKISH envoy upon the frontier, and to conduct him to court.

NISLI MAHOMMED AGA then proceeded on his journey, and arrived at MOSCO, where he made his public entry the sixth of FEBRUARY. Some days after he was conducted to the audience of the CZAR, with the honours due to his character: he delivered his credentials, and begged that commissaries might be nominated to treat with him, concerning the affairs committed to his charge. The grand signior's letter to the CZAR was conceived in very strong, tho' moderate terms. The OTTOMAN emperor intimated to him, that he had carried his resentment to a sufficient length against the LESGEES; and gave him to understand, that as these people were SUNNIS, and consequently under his protection, he could not be an idle spectator, in seeing them reduced under the dominion of any christian prince. This was signifying, that if RUSSIA intended to preserve the peace inviolate, she must give up TARKU and DERBEND, and demolish the fort of the holy cross.

The AGA explained himself fully upon the subject to baron SCHAFFIROFF, vice-chancellor of RUSSIA, and solicited strongly for a quick dispatch; but the CZAR, being informed from CONSTANTINOPLE that the TURKS were as desirous as himself to avoid coming to a rupture, deferred giving an answer.

While the TURKISH envoy endeavoured to discover the motive of this affected delay, HAHDGEE DAOUD BEG, chief of SHAMAKIE, being alarmed to see DERBEND in the hands of a prince, who pretended he had taken

up arms with no other view than to chastise him for his misdemeanours, 1723. had sent a messenger to CONSTANTINOPLE, offering to put himself under the protection of the grand signior. As this proposal facilitated the views which the TURKS had upon GEORGIA, it was received with joy; and the HAHDGEE was assured by the grand signior, that to discharge the duties which his office of IMAM^a imposed upon him, he would soon rescue him from the yoke of the christians, and be revenged of the GEORGIANS, who had encouraged the enemy to invade their country. After which he nominated the HAHDGEE, KHAN of DERBEND, and in this quality he sent him the standards and horses tails, with which BASHA's of the first rank are honoured in TURKEY.

This event confirmed the port in the resolution of engaging the CZAR to abandon his conquests. In order the more easily to persuade him into this measure, the grand signior published a manifesto, setting forth, that as DERBEND formerly constituted a part of his empire, and as the protection which he owed to mussulmen in general, obliged him to assist the LESGEES against the enterprizes of christian powers, he could no longer continue the peace with RUSSIA, unless the CZAR would withdraw his troops from DAGISTAN, and particularly from DERBEND; which he could so much the less forsake, as there was still a mosque there, which was formerly built by the port.

The last reason was so much the more plausible, as the law forbids the MAHOMMEDANS to give up, either by capitulation or treaty, any of those towns where such temples have been raised. This manifesto was hardly sent into RUSSIA, and distributed among the foreign ministers at CONSTANTINOPLE, when the port received letters, by which VAGHTANGA offered, under the conditions already related, to acknowledge the sovereignty of the grand signior.

The port, inclined to make advantage of these different proposals, gave orders to the BASHAS of the provinces of ASIA, to join all the troops of their respective governments to those of the BASHA of ERZEROUM, who was named general in chief^b of the army designed against GEORGIA.

And

^a Chief and defender of the law, and sovereign of the people who profess it.

^b SERASKIER.

1723. And in order to provide against any enterprizes of the RUSSIANS, the garrisons were reinforced, and the magazines of the frontier towns filled with provisions. But the real designs of the port were against PERSIA: this is manifest from her refusing the offer which the KHAN of CRIM TARTARY made to obstruct the progress of the RUSSIANS on the side of PERSIA, by laying siege to ASTRACHAN.

PETER the GREAT was in the same disposition, in this respect, as the port, and was making the same military preparations. He gave orders for putting DERBEND into a state of defence, and for rendering the troops complete. He then assembled an army on the frontiers of DAGISTAN, under pretence that the LESGEES threatened to make an irruption into the kingdom of ASTRACHAN.

In the mean time he continued to amuse the TURKISH envoy, and to insinuate to this minister, that the interest of both courts was to agree concerning the conquests they were to make in PERSIA; that this was the way to avoid any obstacles that might arise on either side; and that acting thus in concert, they might settle the government of that monarchy, in the manner most agreeable to their respective interests. And joining menaces to persuasion, he dispatched NISLI MAHOMMED AGA home with an answer to this effect: that it was not his intention to make the least infringement in the peace, which he had concluded with the port: but if this power should attempt to oppose his views, he would take proper measures to cross the designs which the grand signior might have against the countries situate between the two seas^c. At the same time he gave orders to transport the artillery, with ammunition and provisions, for taking the field; and leaving MOSCO, he set out the beginning of MARCH for ST. PETERSBURG.

It is evident that the CZAR's proposals were equally advantageous to both empires: of this the port was convinced, but it was difficult to put them in execution. The RUSSIANS and TURKS had in some measure declared war against PERSIA, one by invading DAGISTAN, and the other by marching an army into GEORGIA; so that it did not seem

^c CASPIAN and BLACK SEAS.

seem consistent for TÆHMAS to commit his interests to neighbours who 1723.
were stripping him of his dominions.

The port had still greater obstacles to surmount. As soon as MAGHMUD was become master of ISFAHAN, he enjoined the inhabitants, upon pain of death, to break off all epistolary correspondence, and by the different precautions which he had taken on this occasion, the success of the siege had been kept a secret. Upon the return of OSMAN AGA from ISFAHAN, the court of CONSTANTINOPLE was informed that this prince had obliged SHAH HUSSEIN to resign his capital and his diadem. This great event occasioned new deliberations. MAGHMUD seemed possessed of the qualifications and fortune of those conquerors, who in former ages had ravaged ASIA. The TURKISH ministers however were not so much afraid of his power, as embarrassed by his being of the sect of the SUNNIS as well as themselves. They concluded that their troops would refuse to fight against a prince, who, by the destruction of the PERSIAN empire, appeared as a hero of their religion. This difficulty increased, as they were to enter into an alliance with a christian power, not only to share between them the different provinces of a monarchy ceded by the abdication of SHAH HUSSEIN to MAGHMUD, but likewise to dethrone him, and to substitute in his stead TÆHMAS, a prince of the sect of ALI. Yet it seemed prudent to put a stop to the progress of a man, whose ambitious enterprizes already threatened the empire; and there was no possibility of effecting this with any security to the frontier, but by accepting the CZAR's proposal.

The port was thus in suspense between the fear of MAGHMUD's future success, and the hope of reaping some advantage from the situation to which he had reduced the kingdom of PERSIA. The CZAR, who had prolonged the negotiation with the TURKISH minister upon the same principle, gave orders that he should be conducted to the frontier by very slow journeys; so that he did not reach CONSTANTINOPLE till the end of MAY. As soon as he arrived, he assured the grand signior, that the CZAR had no other intention than to support a good understanding with his highness; adding, that this prince had sent full powers to his resident,

1723. to act in concert with the port, that no umbrage might be taken on either side.

In the beginning of MARCH, GHILAN submitted to the RUSSIAN troops. About the same time IBRAHIM, BASHA of ERZEROUM, was joined by the BEGLERBEGS of DIARBECK, TREBESONDE, and several others, who formed an army of 40,000 men. The BASHA put himself at the head of them, and sent a messenger to MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN, VALI of GEORGIA, demanding the delivery of the city and castle of TEFLIS. The VALI wanted neither courage nor experience; but he had very few troops, and the taxes which he had imposed, alienated the affections of the people from him, in the very beginning of his reign. Under these circumstances he submitted to the OTTOMAN dominion, on condition that the SERASKIER would confirm him in his principality. The TURKISH deputy promised him this upon oath, and returned to give an account of his negotiation to the general.

Agreeably to this convention, the TURKS marched to the walls of TEFLIS the 12th of JUNE. MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN met the SERASKIER with a numerous retinue in due form, and delivered the keys of the town and castle to him. This general received the VALI with great demonstrations of benevolence, and as a mark of honour gave him a vest lined with sable; but as soon as he took possession of the fortrefs, he ordered him to be arrested, thus confirming a GEORGIAN proverb, "To trust an OTTOMAN is to lean upon a wave^d." The deposed KHAN found means a few days after to escape from prison; and retired into his principality of CAKET. In the mean time the port had nominated BACCAR, VACHTANGA's eldest son, for his successor. This prince was so averse to the new government, that a few months afterwards he went out of TEFLIS, under pretence of diverting himself by hunting, and voluntarily retired from a place, where he enjoyed only the empty title of sovereign.

In the mean time the SERASKIER, encouraged by the reduction of TEFLIS, cast his eye upon GANJA, and marched his army the autumn following,

^d TURKISH honour has had a reputation, but most modern writers mention it as an imaginary thing.

following, in order to lay siege to it. He made himself master of the suburb of the ARMENIANS; but the garrison and inhabitants of the town recovering from their surprize, attacked him in his camp. The TURKS, being pressed hard on every side, abandoned their artillery and baggage, and fled with the utmost precipitation: they lost on this occasion 3000 men. The SERASKIER, dispirited by this disgrace, retired with the shattered remains of his army to his government of ERZEROUM. 1723.

The reduction of GEORGIA had in some measure made the TURKS amends for the uneasiness occasioned by the RUSSIANS taking possession of GHILAN. The courts of ST. PETERSBURG and CONSTANTINOPLE seemed now to triumph successively at the expence of the fugitive king of PERSIA. As their jealousy of each other increased with their success, they took such measures as they judged most convenient for their mutual security. The CZAR marched fresh troops towards SHIRVAN; and the grand signior put AZOFF, and the other towns on the RUSSIAN frontiers, in a posture of defence.

TÆHMAS SHAH being thus on all sides oppressed, resolved to try his success in negotiation. With this view he confirmed the credentials which his father had given ISMAEL BEG, as ambassador to the court of ST. PETERSBURG; and nominated another for that of CONSTANTINOPLE. They both set out at the same time. The person appointed for the OTTOMAN port was detained at CARS; but he dispatched two of his retinue in a secret manner to notify the subject of his embassy. These deputies took the opportunity of the grand signior's coming out of the mosque at the feast of BEIRAM, to present their memorial to him. They were then introduced to the grand signior and the musti, to whom they delivered their dispatches; the result of which was, that in OCTOBER following the PERSIAN ambassador was permitted to come to CONSTANTINOPLE. His commission was, to request the assistance of the TURKS against the AFGHAN rebels. The grand vizir being informed that an ambassador had been sent into RUSSIA upon the same errand, not only made it a reason to evade a definitive answer, but reproached TÆHMAS for making any such application to a christian power. This behaviour was in some measure owing

1723. to the reception which had been given at CONSTANTINOPLE some months before to the envoy of MIR MAGHMUD. The court seemed desirous at this time to humour the affection which the people shewed to the AF-GHANS; as well as to pursue the projects which they had formed, in consequence of the reduction of GEORGIA.

ISMAEL BEG, whom TÆHMAS had nominated as ambassador-pleni-potentiary to the court of RUSSIA, was more successful. He arrived at ST. PETERSBURG the second of SEPTEMBER. The CZAR, whose active genius was impatient of delay, fixed the audience for the fifth. This ceremony was performed before the senate, after the following manner: The ambassador, with his retinue, left their sabres at the hall-door. He made his entrance, holding up in his hand his master's letter, which, after he had made his harangue, he presented to the CZAR. This prince gave it to his chancellor, who laid it upon the table, desiring the ambassador to draw nearer to the throne; which having done, upon his knees, he kissed the hem of the CZAR's garment, and afterwards his hand: at the same time the CZAR inquired after the king's health. The PERSIAN minister applying this to SHAH HUSSEIN, and believing he was dead, made no reply, but shed tears. The chancellor then informed the ambassador, that his majesty's ministers would answer the letter which he had brought; upon which he withdrew to the hall, where he had left his retinue.

Soon after arrived news of the surrender of BAKU. The necessity of preserving a communication by land with GHILAN, had determined the CZAR to make himself master of that coast; in consequence of which, he had given orders to major-general MATUSKIN to embark with 3000 men at ASTRACHAN, and the 28th of JULY they arrived at BAKU. The general immediately wrote to the commanding officer, " That as the inhabitants
" had sued the preceding year for the protection of the emperor his
" master, tho' his majesty then shewed some repugnance to accept of
" their allegiance, yet in consideration of the friendship subsisting between
" him and the king of PERSIA, and through compassion for themselves,
" he had resolved to send a body of troops, with ammunition and pro-
" visions;

“visions; therefore they ought to render themselves worthy of this favour
“by a ready submission, if they were willing to be considered as loyal
“subjects, and good citizens.” 1723.

In passing through ASTRACHAN, ISMAEL BEG had left a letter, which was now delivered, exhorting the inhabitants of BAKU to a submission; but the governor answered, that he could not admit foreign troops into the town, without the express orders of SHAH TÆHMAS. As he persisted in this resolution, general MATUSKIN began to cannonade the town, and employed the two galliots, which he had brought with him for that purpose, in bombarding it. The garrison of BAKU was very numerous, and the commandant seemed determined to make an obstinate defence; but on the 7th of AUGUST he demanded to capitulate, and sent a deputation of the principal inhabitants to acquaint the general that he would surrender up the town.

This conquest created no difficulty in the negotiation with which ISMAEL BEG was charged. He was well acquainted with the melancholy situation of his master's affairs, and knew that he could not obtain any succours upon better conditions: he took no notice of the hostilities which he had in some measure authorized by his letter, but solicited the CZAR's ministers in so strong a manner, that they signed a treaty of alliance with him the 23d of SEPTEMBER, on the following conditions:

I. That the CZAR should pacify the troubles of PERSIA, drive out the AFGHANS, and re-establish the government.

II. That TÆHMAS, as lawful sovereign of that kingdom, should yield in perpetuity to the RUSSIAN monarchy, the towns and dependancies of DERBEND and BAKU, with the provinces of GHILAN, MAZANDERAN and ASTRABAD.

III. That he should furnish, at the prices stipulated in this public act, camels and provisions for the RUSSIAN troops.

IV. That hereafter there should be full liberty of commerce between both nations.

V. In fine, that this alliance should be mutually defensive.

PART

P A R T VII.

T H E

R E V O L U T I O N S O F P E R S I A,

F R O M T H E

T R E A T Y C O N C L U D E D B E T W E E N T H E

E M P E R O R O F R U S S I A A N D

T Æ H M A S S H A H I N 1723,

T O T H E

D E A T H O F M I R M A G H M U D I N 1725.

C H A P. XXVII.

Pretensions of AMAN OLA to the crown, compromised. Surrender of CASHAN. Death and character of NAZR ULLA. He is succeeded by ZEBERDEST KHAN, who takes and plunders SHIRASS.

1723. **W**HILE TÆHMAS was thus obliged to yield to necessity, MAGH-MUD was in danger of being stripped of the sovereignty by the very man who had most contributed to his conquests. We have already mentioned that AMAN OLA followed him in this expedition as a confederate, and not as a subject. This general, jealous of the superiority which the partner of his victories had acquired over him, diffembled his resentment in hopes of indemnifying himself by the wealth which he expected to draw from CASBIN. It is pretended that MAGH-MUD had consented to his being declared sovereign of that city and its district;

district; but the bad success this general met with in that expedition irritated him so much, that he was hardly recovered of his wounds, when he insisted boldly on MAGHMUD's sharing with him the treasure and sovereignty annexed to the PERSIAN diadem, pursuant to the compact which he said they had entered into upon their setting out from KANDAHAR. 1723.

Regal power, divided between two persons, is absolutely inconsistent, even in a limited monarchy; and consequently impracticable in despotic governments: as to the treasures, they were necessary to the support of the state. MAGHMUD therefore could not agree to these proposals; it was his interest however to carry it fair with an experienced general, who had moreover brought a considerable body of troops with him, which would obey only his orders. This circumstance seemed to presage the downfall of their usurped power. MAGHMUD amused him with different promises; till AMAN OLA perceiving that he was trifled with, resolved to keep no further measures. One of SHAH HUSSEIN's daughters, whom MAGHMUD had given him in marriage, contributed to inflame his temper, which was naturally fierce. She reminded him of the perfidy and ambition, of the avarice and cruelty of MAGHMUD; she made him also sensible of the danger to which his life was exposed, if he did not immediately remove out of the power of the tyrant; and at length prevailed on him to join his forces to those of TÆHMAS SHAH, in order to drive away the usurper, and divide his spoils between them.

With this intent, towards the end of DECEMBER, AMAN OLA left ISFAHAN. As soon as he was out of the gates, he put the royal plume upon his turban; and, in order to deceive MAGHMUD, he took the road to KANDAHAR. MAGHMUD did not venture to oppose his march; he was afraid of increasing the number of his enemies; and perhaps was not sorry, though at the expence of part of his army, to be disengaged from a man who had the presumption to declare himself his competitor. But as soon as he heard that this general had altered his rout, he was so affected with a sense of the danger that might ensue, that he set out immediately in pursuit of him with what forces he could collect, ordering

1723. ing the rest of his army to follow him with all possible expedition; and in four days he came up with him.

It was presumed, that AMAN OLA would not venture himself again into the power of a man, to whom he had given such subject of offence, but rather decide the quarrel by the sword. Instances of caprice and inconstancy are very frequent among the eastern warriors: as soon as they came in sight, they ran and embraced each other. Whether the remembrance of past friendship stifled all reproaches, and opened their eyes to a mutual interest; or that AMAN OLA did not depend on the fidelity of his troops, to measure his strength with that of the young conqueror; these marks of affection were followed by a reconciliation; and AMAN OLA was won once more by MAGHMUD's promises.

This prince artfully soothed the ruling passion of his disgusted friend, and made him the compliment of his own horse: they embraced each other, and renewed their former oaths on the points of their naked sabres. MAGHMUD sent him back to ISFAHAN, escorted by a body of horse; with orders to the governor of the city to pay him all the deference he could desire, except granting him his full liberty.

MAGHMUD having thus prevented the danger of his friend's resentment, obliged the troops belonging to that general to swear allegiance to him, and had the judgment to incorporate them with his own. He then joined the forces under ZEBERDEST KHAN. This general had lately raised his reputation by a new conquest. He blockaded CASHAN, the inhabitants of which, intimidated by the taking of GHULPAIGAN and HONSAR, surrendered by capitulation. The KHAN paid a religious regard to his promise, so that there was neither any disorder nor plundering in the town; but it is said that he afterwards massacred a considerable number of those fit to bear arms, in order to secure a conquest, which he had not otherwise sufficient force to garrison.

It was not till after this barbarous execution that MAGHMUD joined the victorious army: the news he had received from FARSISTAN, was the cause of this motion. NAZR ULLA, who had been intrusted with the reduction

reduction of that province, made himself master of all the towns and villages in his way, without meeting with any resistance. The terror of his name induced them to make a ready submission. Thus he arrived in the neighbourhood of SHIRASS, without shedding any blood. Here his fortune changed. In the first attack at the siege of this place, he was wounded by a musket-ball, which put an end to his life. The loss of this general, who had the highest reputation as a soldier, plunged his army into the greatest grief. Of this they gave the most melancholy tokens, by the bloody funeral rites with which they honoured his memory. For after the whole army had marched round his body, with colours trailing on the ground, they obliged their slaves and prisoners to perform the same ceremony, and then sacrificed them at his feet; according to the barbarous superstition which they had learnt of the INDIANS^e. They killed also the finest of his horses, the flesh of which, agreeably to the custom of the AFGHANS, was divided among the soldiers, in order to make a funeral entertainment.

NAZR ULLA was in stature very tall, but ill shaped. The custom he had contracted of keeping one eye shut, procured him the name of the one-eyed lord^f, by which he was often distinguished. He was fond of the ARMENIANS, whom he took openly under his protection. The incursions and robberies in which he had been exercised from his youth, had formed him early to military exercise, in which he acquired great reputation, and was esteemed by his own people as a consummate general. His great prudence, and the series of success attending it, made him suspected of having learnt the magic art, ascribed to the INDIANS. It was perhaps this prejudice that created an extraordinary confidence in his soldiers, who thought him invincible.

He was of a mild and humane temper, behaving towards those who submitted to him, with a strict regard to his word, and with a certain degree of clemency, to which the other rebel chiefs were utter strangers. All nations reverence virtue, tho' it is not always attended with success,
nor

^e See Vol. IV. Chap. XVII.^f KIOR SULTAN.

1723. nor always the object of vulgar attention. Humanity in a soldier, whose duty calls him into scenes of blood, is an illustrious quality. The good inclinations of this AFGHAN, tho' of the religion of the MAGI, gained him honour even after death. MAGHMUD erected a stately monument to him, near the burying place of the ARMENIANS. The AFGHANS looked upon him as a saint, and expressed a high veneration for his memory. This was the more extraordinary, as they could not plead ignorance that he was a worshipper of fire; since there were two priests hired by the sultan, who kept the sacred flame near his tomb.

MAGHMUD chose ZEBERDEST KHAN to succeed that general; accordingly he ordered him to set out immediately for SHIRASS; after which he returned himself with the army to ISFAHAN, where he arrived towards
1724. the end of MARCH.

As he entered the city, he was struck with surprize and admiration, at an extraordinary event. A woman disguised in man's apparel, seeing his troops upon their march, rode up to them in full gallop, and falling sword in hand upon the first that fell in her way, she is said to have killed about twenty, before she was seized. This woman was a native of GEORGIA, and possessed the military disposition of that nation in so eminent a degree, that she had formed the design of revenging on the first AFGHANS she could meet, the death of her husband, who was slain at the bridge ABASABAD, when ISFAHAN was taken. For this purpose, she committed the care of her effects, and of her two children, to her brother; and without being daunted at the rigor of the season, or the length of the journey, she set out from GEORGIA in a secret manner, in man's dress, well armed and equipped. She was brought before MAGHMUD covered with wounds; this prince, upon being informed of her sex, admired her resolution, and gave orders that she should be treated with all the care and attention, which the greatness of her courage deserved^s.

In

^s Military courage is a virtue much in esteem in the east, among people who live by the sword; but women are no where more defenceless than in ASIA. This seems to be a stronger instance of female resentment than that of the SPANISH lady, who dug up the body of one who had been false as a lover, and whom she had caused to be murdered; in order to enjoy the pleasure of tearing his heart in pieces with her teeth.

In the mean time, the news of NAZR ULLA's death being spread, some of the cities and towns of FARSISTAN, which had submitted, took up arms again, as if this single event secured them from any further danger. 1724. ZEBERDEST KHAN had therefore some difficulty to join his army, whom he found desirous of revenging the death of their late general. The glory of succeeding a man so much regreted, was a new subject of emulation to him; and indeed he omitted nothing that might contribute to the success of this new enterprize.

The KHAN of the province remained in the town: he was a man unpractised in the military art, but loyal and honest; and from a consciousness that he was not possessed of skill sufficient to extricate himself out of such a difficulty, he had by presents and promises engaged MIR BAGHIR, brother of ABDALLAH, VALI of ARABIA, to come to his assistance. This prince was esteemed a very good general: he repaired to SHIRASS with as many of his own people as were disposed to follow him; and took upon him the command of the town under the KHAN. The walls were in a good condition; the parts most exposed were covered with entrenchments; and frequent sallies from the town had induced the AFGHANS almost to despair of success; when the KHAN was so ill advised as to check the ardour of the garrison, by not permitting them to stir any more from the walls: this was the fault which had occasioned the misfortunes and surrender of ISFAHAN.

This step was soon followed by the inconveniencies naturally attending it. The ardour of the troops abated; a scarcity of provisions ensued; and the soldiers were so disheartened, as to think only of making their escape, to prevent being starved. The enemy being sensible of the advantage of such a desertion, favoured it, by granting a free passage. The scarcity increasing, MIR BAGHIR undertook to save the town, by making a vigorous sally. Accordingly he marched out at the head of 6000 men, who surprised and dispersed the besieging army: but such fortune did not attend him long. Soon after, he endeavoured to re-enter the town with a convoy which he brought with him, but was opposed by a body of troops, who, tho' inferior in number, attacked him with such resolution, that

1724. his army was put to flight. This brave ARABIAN, whose character was the reverse of his brother's, who occasioned the loss of ISFAHAN, stood his ground with only 200 men, who, imitating his example, died like him, fighting gloriously to the last gasp.

The cutting off so necessary a supply, was not the most considerable advantage which the AFGHANS reaped from this victory. The country was ravaged, and the neighbouring towns kept so much on their guard, that the scarcity was greater in their camp than in SHIRASS; insomuch that ZEBERDEST KHAN was upon the point of raising the siege, when the taking of the convoy enabled him to wait at his leisure, till the enemy, overcome by famine, would be obliged to implore his mercy. He was not deceived in his expectations; for SHIRASS was soon reduced to a very melancholy situation, numbers of the inhabitants dying with famine; so that the KHAN determined to capitulate. On the 13th of APRIL he sent his brother to treat with the enemy.

This resolution was followed by an easy and imprudent security. The AFGHANS perceiving that the besieged had neglected their posts, detained the deputy, and made a general assault. The PERSIANS, surprized and disconcerted, made very little resistance. The AFGHANS put every one they found in arms to the sword; and this unhappy town was under these dreadful circumstances, when the officers restrained the fury of the soldiers. The massacre being over, the conquerors plundered with their ordinary licentiousness. One remarkable incident is recorded of the punishment of covetousness: some of the soldiers having found in the house of a private man a considerable quantity of corn, which he had concealed in prejudice to the other inhabitants, they tied him to a stake in his granary, where he died with hunger; revenging the death of many, whom this wretch had sacrificed to his avarice.

Thus one of the most celebrated cities of the east was taken and sacked, after a blockade of near eight months: the AFGHANS having despaired to reduce it otherwise than by famine, confined themselves to their several posts. They lost before it 2000 of the troops of their own nation, and

a considerable number of DERGHEZINS. The number of PERSIANS who died by the sword, was not so great as that which perished by famine. ZEBERDEST KHAN exacted no more of the inhabitants by way of tribute, than what they annually paid to the kings of PERSIA. He then ordered them to collect provisions from all the neighbouring parts, that he might send a supply as soon as possible to ISFAHAN, where it was greatly wanted.

C H A P. XXVIII.

ZEBERDEST KHAN's expedition against BENDER ABASSI. MAGHMUD marches into COHKILAN, and loses great part of his army. Imprudent conduct of SHAH TÆHMAS towards the ARMENIANS. The TURKS take ERIVAN. The ARMENIANS of NACHIVAN invite the TURKS into their country. TAVRIS besieged by the TURKS, and taken. Siege of HAMADAN.

ZEBERDEST KHAN was animated by the taking SHIRASS, a place of such consequence; and began to meditate new conquests. He had hardly settled the government of that city, when he ordered HUSSEIN AGA, one of the officers of MAGHMUD's household, with four hundred men, to make an incursion into the southern part of the province. This detachment penetrated without any obstacle as far as LAR, the capital of LARISTAN, a province formerly governed by its own kings. HUSSEIN AGA plundered the city with his small body of men, but the castle held out, and the governor of it refused to capitulate. The AFGHAN commander then pushed on as far as BENDER ABASSIⁿ. This was the second time during the war that this city was exposed. In JANUARY 1722 it was pillaged, without making any resistance, by 4000 BALOUCHES; but upon their attempting to break into the fortresses, where the ENGLISH and DUTCH EAST INDIA companies had their counting-houses, they were repulsed with considerable loss.

The AFGHANS succeeded still worse. Upon the first report of their march the inhabitants retired with their most valuable effects: but the EUROPEANS

1724. PEANS were prepared to give them a warm reception. The AFGHANS therefore thought proper to accept a supply of provisions, without making any attempt on them. The greatest part of this detachment died: the malignity of the air, and the bad quality of the water not agreeing with them, insomuch that they were reduced within two months to a very small number, who rejoined the army without making any accession by the plunder of this city, to the riches they had amassed in their expedition.

During this interval, the news of the taking of SHIRASS having reached ISFAHAN, the AFGHANS were animated with fresh ardour. MAGHMUD resolved to lead them himself in person to new conquests. Accordingly he set out in JUNE with an intent of subduing COKHILAN, a country situate within ten days journey of the capital, towards BASSORAⁱ. His army was near thirty thousand men: so that he had all the reason to promise himself undoubted success; but the event did not answer his expectation. His troops were not only harrassed continually by the ARABS who inhabit the neighbouring country, but also distressed for want of provisions; whilst the air had the most pernicious effects on his soldiers, insomuch that he did not bring half of his men back to ISFAHAN. His disaster would have been still greater, if CASSIN KHAN, a PERSIAN, who was possessed of a government in those quarters, had not given him all the assistance in his power.

MAGHMUD compounded with the ARABS to return back, on condition of being furnished with provisions; but these people perceiving his inability to withstand them, broke their word, and harrassed his army to the greatest degree. Thus was the formidable MAGHMUD by too great confidence, and the efforts of some bodies of roving ARABS, reduced to the utmost streights. He was so shocked at his losses, that he made his entrance into ISFAHAN without those honours which it had been customary to pay him on the like occasions. His army being thus discouraged, prudence suggested to him the expedient of distributing fifty thousand tomans^k among his troops, to indemnify them for the loss of their

ⁱ This is part of CHUSISTAN, whose capital is AHOUAS.

^k 125,000 *l*.

their baggage; and he employed them the rest of the summer in repairing 1724. this accident, as far as the melancholy situation of his affairs admitted.

In this state of weakness and despondency, to which MAGHMUD was reduced, TÆHMAS SHAH might have entertained great hopes of recovering the diadem, and taking ample vengeance of the AFGHANS; but this prince was entangled in inextricable difficulties: forgetting that his imprudent resentments had the preceding year occasioned the revolt of TEFLIS, he loaded the ARMENIANS with excessive taxes, which were levied with the utmost rigour. So severe a proceeding, contrary to his natural disposition, alienated the affections of these people in the very beginning; and things were soon carried to an extremity. Necessity being without law, he entered some of their principal towns by force, and plundered them, especially such as refused to obey the orders he had sent them to join his troops, though by law they were exempted from all military service.

The ARMENIANS of CAPAN and CHIAVA, finding they were treated as enemies, took up arms. TÆHMAS, who seemed to exert his resolution only where prudence was wanting, intended to reduce them by force; but they gave him so warm a reception, that he became more circumspect, and determined at length to enter into a treaty with them. He gained by gentle measures, what he could not obtain by force; and those people having returned to their duty, gave the greatest proofs of their fidelity. But it was not in the nature of things, that TÆHMAS should recover his dominions at this time.

The TURKS being jealous of the advantages secured to the CZAR by the treaty of ST. PETERSBURG, endeavoured to counterbalance them by their conquests. With this view, they provided for the security of GEORGIA; built a new fortress near TEFLIS; and assembled different bodies of troops on the frontiers of the PERSIAN dominions. ABDALLAH, BASHA of VAN¹, entered this province the beginning of the year. MAHOMMED

¹ His surname was KOUPRUL OGLOU, or the son of KOUPROLI. This family is descended from the grand vizir KOUPROLI MAHOMMED BASHA, son of a country parson in the neighbourhood of BELGRADE in ALBANIA. This is almost the only family in TURKEY that has a proper name.

1724. MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN, the same who had surrendered TEFLIS, made a stand at the head of a body of troops. The BASHA having reinforced the garrisons of the several towns in GEORGIA, marched against him with 35000 men, and soon put him to flight. After this, in FEBRUARY, he penetrated into ADERBEITZAN, and laid siege to KHOI, which held out two months, and was then taken by storm, and plundered.

ARIFIE ACHMED, BASHA of DIARBEEKIR, whom the port had nominated SERASKIER, now projected a more important expedition. This general passed the ARAS the end of JUNE, and entered the province of ERIVAN with an army of above 30,000 men. In order to intimidate the inhabitants, he treated them with great cruelty. The towns and villages upon his march, were intirely sacked; and he made slaves of above 20,000 persons of both sexes. After these barbarous hostilities, in the middle of the same month he arrived before ERIVAN, the capital of the province.

This city, the capital of ARMENIA, is distant about six leagues from mount ARARAT^m. In 1635 it was situated a mile from the spot where it now stands. SHAH SEFFIE having taken it from the TURKS, made choice of the present situation. The castle is built on a steep rock, inaccessible towards the west; and on the other sides it is defended by a triple wall of brick. At the foot of this rock runs the river ZENGUI, which descends from the lake SEVANⁿ, and mixes its waters three leagues lower with the ARAS. The KHAN of the province resided in the castle. The town is encompassed by a double wall, and abounds more in gardens and vineyards than houses. The adjacent country is a large fertile plain, terminated by the mountains, of which ARARAT makes a part; and the whole forms a most delightful prospect. This advantage, however, is counterbalanced by great inconveniencies. The water and fruits are very unwholesome; the country is subject to frequent earthquakes; their winters, notwithstanding their latitude, are long and severe; and they have excessive heats in summer. During the months of JULY and AUGUST,

most

^m I have already had occasion to mention, that according to the tradition of the ARMENIANS the ark rested on this mountain.

ⁿ This lake is about 70 miles distant northward of the city.

most of the inhabitants leave their houses, and retreat to breathe a more temperate air in the mountains. It is computed, that in the heat of summer there are often 20,000 tents in their neighbourhood; for not only the KOURDS travel thus far northward, but likewise the people from the extremity of CALDÆA, come hither with their flocks. 1724.

The OTTOMAN army had with them a numerous artillery, with which they soon made a breach in the walls. The SERASKIER then attempted to storm the town; and tho' his troops behaved with great courage, they were as bravely repulsed by the garrison. They met with the same reception at three general assaults; and the air being in some measure infected with the number of dead bodies; the TURKISH general desired a truce of three days, in order to bury the dead.

In the interim, the BASHA of CUTAYA joined the army. This determined the SERASKIER to try his fortune once more. The 10th of SEPTEMBER he ordered the fourth general assault; but with so little success, that he suffered more on this occasion than in any of the former attacks. The TURKS having lost near 20,000 men by the sword, and the unwholesomeness of the air, were discouraged. They had indeed received frequent succours, and their bombs had reduced great part of the town into ruins; but the PERSIANS as well as the ARMENIANS, actuated by the double motive of rage and self-preservation, still shewed the same courage and resolution. The besiegers, almost exhausted with the fatigue of so long a siege, threatened openly to retire; when the arrival of a reinforcement of fresh troops from EGYPT, changed the scene. SARI MUSTAFA, BASHA of ERZEROUM, also brought a considerable reinforcement with him towards the end of the month; so that the murmurings of the soldiers began to cease, and they thought of nothing further than bringing this enterprize to a happy conclusion.

The KHAN, who commanded the town, began to be intimidated at the sight of such large reinforcements. The garrison was already in distress for provisions; and a great number of the soldiers and inhabitants had perished with hunger, sickness, or the sword. They expected no succours

1724. from TÄHMAS, and were reduced, for want of lead, to new-cast the few balls that were remaining, and those which they found in the breaches and ditches, by putting a pea in them; an expedient which might conceal their want of this kind of ammunition; but yet it diminished the weight of the ball, which must consequently do less execution. These circumstances, and the pressing solicitations of his brother, whom the TURKS had taken prisoner near the ARAS, determined the KHAN to enter into a capitulation.

The first of OCTOBER he sent deputies to the TURKISH camp, and after some difficulties it was agreed, that the governor and the garrison should be safely conducted with all their effects to the frontiers of KARABAGH^o: that the inhabitants of the castle, and those who had retired thither during the siege, but had no share in defending the town, should quit it and retire to the old ERIVAN: that none of them should be molested, either in their persons or effects: and that the town, the castle with the artillery, and ammunitions, should be immediately surrendered to the grand signior.

These articles were punctually executed. The BASHA of KARAHISSAR conducted the garrison to the frontier, from whence the KHAN proceeded to AHR, where TÄHMAS then resided.

During this interval, the troops under the command of the BASHA of VAN, were not idle. This general having defeated MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN, as already related, and taken the fortress of KHOI, had formed a design upon TAVRIS. As he had not troops sufficient to attempt a place of that importance, he acquainted the court; and the BASHAS of CARAMENIA and ALEPPO, with some others were ordered to join his army.

Towards the beginning of AUGUST, he received a deputation from the ARMENIANS of NACSIVAN^p. The inhabitants began to despair of succours from the PERSIANS, and were afraid of the cruelties of the TURKS; the subject therefore of their deputation was, to recommend the conquest of their

^o A district south of the ARAS, full of inaccessible mountains. DE LISLE has a place called CACHABAN.

^p NACSIVAN signifies the first made. The ARMENIANS pretend it was the first city that was built after the deluge.

their country to the BASHA. Upon this he ordered the chiefs ¹ of KOUR- 1724-
DISTAN to march thither with 12,000 men, and to these he joined a detachment of 1000 TURKS, commanded by IBRAHIM AGA. These troops no sooner appeared in the province, than the ARMENIANS rose up in arms. The PERSIANS were driven from NACSIVAN and ORDOUBAD ². This expedition, together with the taking of ERIVAN, reduced the greatest part of ARMENIA MAJOR under the TURKISH yoke.

In the mean while, the BASHA of VAN marched with an army of twenty-five thousand men towards TAVRIS. Tho' a great part of this town had been destroyed by the earthquake already mentioned, it was still one of the finest cities in the east; but it had neither walls nor artillery, so that like antient SPARTA, its only bulwark consisted in the number and strength of its inhabitants. The TURKS, crowding upon one another, had already made themselves masters of a whole quarter of the town, when the inhabitants flocking from all parts, barricadoed the streets by which the enemy had entered; and their communication with the main body of the army being cut off, four thousand of their men were surrounded, and cut in pieces.

The BASHA was not discouraged by this disaster: he made several attacks, but his troops were constantly repulsed. He began to waver in his resolution, when his spies informed him, that the inhabitants were preparing to attack him the next night in his entrenchments. Finding the valour of his troops unequal to his design, he ordered fires to be made in his camp as usual; and the 21st of SEPTEMBER in the night he marched off silently, leaving his tents standing, the better to deceive the enemy. Some hours afterwards the inhabitants came out of the city, to the number of twenty thousand: finding that the TURKISH army was retired, they followed them till the next day at noon, but could not come up with them. In revenge they massacred not only all the stragglers that fell in their way, but likewise the sick and wounded, which the enemy had been obliged to leave to their discretion.

The OTTOMAN army, considerably reduced, retired to TASSOU, a town situate within twenty leagues of TAVRIS, on the north bank of the lake

B b 2

CHAH.

¹ BEGS.² This place is noted for its trade in silken and other manufactures.

1724. CHAHI. Here the TURKISH general added to his disgrace, by attempting to be revenged of the PERSIANS for the gallant defence they had made. Tho' the neighbouring villages had submitted without making any resistance, yet he carried the women and children with him as slaves, and put the men to the sword. The inhabitants of TAVRIS were so provoked at this cruelty, that they took the resolution of pursuing him, and preventing his retreat. The BASHA having notice of their approach, marched out at the head of eight thousand men; most of these were killed in the engagement, and he retired to KHOI with the few who saved themselves by flight.

These were not the only armies which the TURKS had in PERSIA. HASSAN, BASHA of BAGDAT, and ACHMED his son, BASHA of BASSORA, entered this country with the troops belonging to their respective governments, and laid siege to HAMADAN. TÆHMAS, encouraged by what had passed before TAVRIS, sent part of his troops under the command of FLAGELLA KHAN, one of his principal officers, to the relief of this town. But the success did not answer his expectations: his general was defeated, and put to flight.

The OTTOMAN army being thus free, continued the operations of the siege without interruption. In the mean time, the enemy defended themselves with the same resolution; and it was now two months since the opening of the trenches, when a GERMAN renegado sprung a mine, of which he had the direction. The effect determined the fate of the besieged. The TURKS mounted the breach with loud shouts, and carried all before them: a slaughter of the inhabitants ensued, till some of the TURKISH generals, moved by a sense of humanity, facilitated the escape of great numbers, by giving them a passage out of one of the gates of the town.

The taking of ERIVAN and HAMADAN, and the repulse of the BASHA of VAN, concluded the campaign on the side of the TURKS. The army under the SERASKIER, together with the remaining forces of the BASHA of VAN, were reduced to forty thousand men, including the garrisons of GEORGIA. The troops of EGYPT and the KOURDS separated, and took up their

their winter quarters in ERIVAN, NACSIVAN, and ORDOUBAD. Those of 1724. BAGDAT and BASSORA, retired to their own country, after leaving a sufficient garrison in HAMADAN, to secure their conquest.

C H A P. XXIX.

Rejoicings at CONSTANTINOPLE. The port is dissatisfied with the conduct of PETER the GREAT. The conferences renewed by the mediation of the FRENCH minister to the OTTOMAN port. Conclusion of the treaty between the CZAR and the port. Articles of that treaty.

THE TURKS having extended their conquests so far as HAMADAN; this event seemed to quiet the minds of the people, already uneasy concerning the success of a war hardly commenced. This circumstance added to the satisfaction of the ministers of the port. The public rejoicings lasted nine days, and were scarce finished, when they were ordered to be renewed on the following occasion. MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN, who still thirsted after revenge, had passed the KURA near GORI, and laid siege to the fort by which that little city is defended. He was carrying on the attack with great vigour, when REGEZ, BASHA of TEFLIS, marched with 6000 men to the relief of the place: this, together with the defection of the principal GEORGIANS, who were gained by the port, obliged the KHAN to retire with great precipitation. The TURKS came up with him as he was passing the river; and he lost a thousand men in the action. He then retired with the rest of his troops into the mountains.

The FRENCH ambassador* thought proper to distinguish himself, upon the occasion of these rejoicings, for the accomplishment of one of the articles of the treaty, concluded by the mediation of the court of FRANCE. To explain this, we must trace matters somewhat back.

It has been already mentioned, that the port being informed of the success of ISMAEL BEG, the PERSIAN ambassador at the court of ST. PETERSBURG, pushed on her conquests in PERSIA without reserve. Whether the CZAR slighted the resentment of the port, on account of this

* The marquis of BONNAC.

1724. this treaty ; it was scarce concluded, when he sent copies of it to his resident NEPLUEOFF, but without any instructions to him or to the FRENCH ambassador ; at the same time, he made it public in all the courts of EUROPE. This caused a general surprize at CONSTANTINOPLE. Neither the ambassador, nor the RUSSIAN resident, expected such an event. They were greatly confounded, whilst their enemies laid hold of those circumstances to decry their conduct. This was not difficult to effect. The TURKISH commissaries having opened the conference in the beginning of JANUARY this year, with bitter reproaches, declared in the name of the grand signior, that such a prince as TÆHMAS, wandering from place to place, without succour or support, could not with any validity consent to the dismembering of his dominions ; therefore such engagements were void : that the grand signior would not suffer any foreign power to extend his dominion in PERSIA : consequently, that the only method to preserve the peace subsisting between the two empires, was to relinquish all pretensions derived from this treaty, and likewise to abandon the conquests made on the borders of the CASPIAN sea.

After so explicit a declaration, the TURKISH commissaries broke off the conferences abruptly. It was thought the port would declare war against the CZAR, and send the RUSSIAN resident to the castle of the seven towers. This minister having no instructions, refused to yield to the solicitations of the FRENCH ambassador, to enter into a negotiation ; which served to increase the disgust of the TURKISH ministers ; so that the storm seemed to be gathering, when the ambassador ventured to take the consequence of negotiating upon himself.

With this view he waited on the ministers of the port, and entered into a close conference with them ; in which he reconciled all matters so well, that they were soon agreed upon almost every article*. The grand vizir, who pressed the conclusion of this affair under-hand, found it very difficult to make the divan come into it ; especially as the point was to enter into an alliance with a christian power, in order to share the dominions of a MAHOMMEDAN prince. There was no time to lose : they must
I either

* This relation being made by a FRENCHMAN belonging to the ambassador's ministry, we must allow for some partialities as to the abilities of his master.

either conclude the treaty entered upon with RUSSIA, or stop the progress 1724. of that power, by declaring war against her. IBRAHIM, the grand vizir, laid this before the divan, which he convened in the name of the emperor his master. After very warm debates, the divan declared for the continuation of the peace: upon which, the FRENCH ambassador dispatched monsieur D'ALION^u, a relation of his, to the court of RUSSIA, with the preliminaries of the treaty; who arrived at MOSCO the middle of MARCH.

The first article in his commission was, that SHAH TÆHMAS should be obliged to send a solemn embassy to CONSTANTINOPLE, to beg of the grand signior that he would set limits to his conquests, and consent, as far as was consistent with the glory and interests of his highness, to the execution of the treaty concluded the year before at ST. PETERSBURG. The others contained a project of accommodation, in regard to the limits of the conquests made, or which were to be made in PERSIA, by either of these contracting powers.

These preliminaries having been agreed to, the RUSSIAN resident received new instructions, and the 19th of MAY the conferences were renewed. The vizir had made it an established rule, to live in peace with the christian powers, as necessary to his security. How favourable soever his disposition might have been, there were great obstacles to surmount, before they could come to a conclusion of the treaty. DAGISTAN, and part of SHIRVAN, inhabited by MAHOMMEDANS of the sect of the SUNNIS, were to continue under the dominion of the CZAR: moreover, this monarch required that the port should acknowledge TÆHMAS as king of PERSIA: that she should join her forces to those of RUSSIA, in order to put this prince in possession of the throne: and lastly, that she should engage to receive neither proposals nor ministers from MAGHMUD, or any other usurper. These articles were contrary to their religion, which the MAHOMMEDANS consider as the basis and primum mobile of political government.

Part of these difficulties were removed in a long conference, which the grand vizir had the fifth of JULY with the FRENCH ambassador; and the general

^u This person was minister at the court of ST. PETERSBURG, for some time after the marquis DE CHETARDIE.

1724. general conferences being renewed, the several articles of the treaty were agreed to. They were six in number, preceded by a preamble, setting forth in a summary way, the cession which SHAH TÄHMAS made to the CZAR, of the provinces situated on the borders of the CASPIAN SEA.

The first article determines, that the barrier betwixt RUSSIA and TURKEY shall be regulated by a line, to begin within twenty-two leagues of the CASPIAN SEA on the confines of DAGISTAN, to pass within the like distance of DERBEND, and afterwards within seven leagues of the coast, including SHAMAKIE, after which it is to be drawn in a direct line to the conflux of the KURA and the ARAS. It is likewise stipulated, that the contracting parties shall nominate commissaries, and desire the mediation of the court of FRANCE with regard to the regulation of those limits. That either party shall be free to erect forts upon their own territories, on condition of giving notice thereof to each other, and of building them at the distance of three leagues at least from their frontier.

The second, that SHAMAKIE, the capital of SHIRVAN, shall not be fortified, nor receive a TURKISH garrison; and that if some unforeseen accident, such as a revolt, should oblige this monarch to send any troops thither, they shall acquaint the RUSSIAN officers before they passed the KURA, and retire from thence as soon as the troubles are appeased. The grand signior promises, that his armies shall not pass this river in any part of GEORGIA, without giving notice of the reasons of such motion to the officers appointed by the CZAR, along the coast of the CASPIAN SEA.

The third establishes the barrier which is to separate TURKEY from PERSIA. This line commences where the other finishes, that is, at the conflux of the KURA and ARAS; it passes within three miles of the walls of ARDEVILLE towards TAVRIS, and from thence to HAMADAN, which city, together with the territory belonging to it, falls to the grand signior's share; after which it turns off towards KHERMANSHA, the new conquest of this monarch, where it terminates.

By the fourth, the CZAR promises the grand signior, to employ his mediation, that the provinces assigned him in the preceding article, shall
7 be

be voluntarily surrendered to him, or recovered for him, by a joint effort. This article concludes with a reciprocal guaranty of those provinces of PERSIA, which these monarchs adjudged to themselves. 1724.

These powers declare, that if SHAH TÆHMAS should refuse to agree to the treaty, they will jointly endeavour to conquer the respective places assigned to each; after which, the rest of the kingdom shall be intirely given up, without any foreign dependance, into the hands of SHAH TÆHMAS.

In the fifth, the grand signior engages, as soon as the places assigned him by the third article shall be voluntarily delivered up, to acknowledge TÆHMAS for king of PERSIA; to give him full security of his restoration, and afford him all proper assistance: that in case the usurpers should by any hostility reduce him to the necessity of declaring war against them, he will join his forces to those of RUSSIA, in order to place this prince on the throne of his ancestors.

The sixth article declares, that if TÆHMAS should refuse to conform to the treaty, the contracting powers, after having made themselves masters of the provinces assigned to them, shall appease the disturbances of PERSIA, and restore this kingdom to the PERSIAN most deserving of it, towards whom they shall conduct themselves as they have done towards the kings his predecessors. That they shall not in any manner interfere in the government of his dominions, but jointly take every measure necessary for his tranquillity, without listening to any proposal on the part of MIR MAGHMUD.

This treaty was signed the eighth of JULY, and the ratification of the CZAR being arrived, the exchange was solemnly made some days after in the apartment of the grand vizir. The peace being thus confirmed, the KHAN of the CRIM TARTARS, and the generals of the OTTOMAN troops, who were on the frontier of the UKRAIN, received orders to retire, the one to CRIM TARTARY, and the others towards the DANUBE.

1725. In the mean time TÄHMAS, who was at ARDEVILLE, received an embassador from the CZAR; but this minister had so little reason to be satisfied, that he returned home without taking leave of this prince.

TÄHMAS had lately sent an embassador to the OTTOMAN port, who was arrested at ERZEROUM: at first they treated him in a manner suitable to his character^w, but soon after he was confined as a close prisoner in the castle, and his effects were confiscated.

The unhappy SHAH TÄHMAS saw his country thus torn from him: the PERSIAN monarchy was become a prey. He soon learnt the tenour of the treaty concluded between the RUSSIANS and the TURKS. The passive conduct of his minister ISMAEL BEG^x gave him great offence; but in his circumstances what less was to be expected? He immediately ordered the CZAR's resident to withdraw from his court: but this mark of resentment did not hinder the RUSSIAN monarch from ordering the embassador-extraordinary, whom he had sent to TÄHMAS, to continue his journey. It is presumed that PETER the GREAT would have been contented with GHILAN only, could he have thus prevented the progress of the TURKS, and restored TÄHMAS to his dominions, in which the RUSSIANS were more sincere than the TURKS.

C H A P. XXX.

MIR MAGHMUD *raises new troops. A caravan arrives from KANDAHAR. He marches an army, and lays siege to YEZD; but is obliged to raise it. ASHREFF returns. Disposition of the AFGHANS in his favour. Uneasiness of MAGHMUD upon that account. He undertakes a religious penance. Reports concerning SEFFIE MYRZA.*

WHILST this partition of the PERSIAN dominions was negotiating, MAGHMUD was employed in repairing the breach, which the expedition of COKHILAN had made in his troops. With this view, he enlisted

^w Sixty dollars a day were ordered for his maintenance.

^x He remained at ASTRACHAN and was there still in 1744, and had a guard appointed him, with a daily allowance, not chusing to trust himself at home.

listed a great number of DERGHEZINS: he also levied some new companies of TURKS; and knowing how important a matter it was to conceal his weakness, he not only renewed the prohibition of corresponding by letters, but moreover made it death for any stranger that should attempt to leave the town^y. 1724.

Things were thus situated, when the caravan which he expected, arrived at ISFAHAN. It was not near so numerous as that of the preceding year; owing, in a great measure, to the complaints of some of the AF-GHANS, who at their return to KANDAHAR, accused their sovereign of avarice, and a partial neglect of those who had performed the bravest actions. MAGHMUD, however, perceiving he had now as strong an army as that which had raised him to the throne, was ambitious of effacing the memory of his late disgrace.

After some time, he resolved to lay siege to YEZD, which he had in vain endeavoured to take upon his march to ISFAHAN. The inhabitants of this city had lately routed a reinforcement of 2000 men, who were coming to him from KANDAHAR. The necessity of securing a communication with that province, as well as the desire of retrieving the reputation of his arms, engaged him to turn the greatest part of his forces that way.

Towards the end of DECEMBER, he set out upon this expedition, with an army of 18000 men. Such a number of troops, together with a good train of artillery, which he carried with him, and the correspondence he held with the PERSEES, who inhabit a particular quarter of the town, seemed to render him confident of success; but Providence had otherwise ordained. The inhabitants of YEZD discovered the treachery of their fellow-citizens, and put them to the sword. Having taken this step, they laid the country waste for several leagues round, destroying, or carrying off every thing that might be of any service to the enemy. After this they prepared to defend themselves.

This precaution of the inhabitants, obliged MAGHMUD to push on the siege with the utmost vigour. His artillery was scarce mounted in bat-
tery,

1724. tery, when he ordered a general assault. The AFGHANS attacked the town on every side with great bravery, in confidence of the promises of the PERSEES; but they were received with so much resolution and courage, that they were soon convinced there was no dependance to be made on any assistance from that quarter.

This assault was followed by several others, which proved equally unsuccessful. In the mean time, the severity of the season very much distressed the AFGHANS; they were also straitened for provisions; which reduced them to the necessity of raising the siege a second time, or of weakening the army considerably, by sending out large detachments to some distance, in search of provisions. MAGHMUD determined upon the latter; but he had soon reason to repent his choice. The garrison had been increased by a number of people who had fled for shelter from the open country; finding the AFGHANS weakened, they fell suddenly upon their principal quarters, and confounded them by so brisk and unexpected an attack; insomuch that they put several parties of them to flight, and killed near 3000 men, before the main body of the army could be assembled. MAGHMUD himself was in danger of being surrounded, and obliged to abandon his baggage and artillery, and save himself by flight.

The uneasiness occasioned by this new disgrace, was augmented by the mutinous disposition of the army. The soldiers declared loudly, that their defeat was a consequence of the change of manners introduced into the nation; that they were upon the brink of being ruined by that very effeminacy and luxury, which had destroyed their enemies; that MAGHMUD was already a PERSIAN in his apparel, and his luxurious diet, but still more so by the excessive number of concubines with which he had filled his harram; adding, that no further hopes of success remained, so long as they were governed by a chief, who, not satisfied with adopting the manners of the conquered, affected likewise to espouse their sentiments in matters of religion. This last reproach was owing to some words which MAGHMUD had let drop, perhaps with a design to vex the TURKS, or to render himself more agreeable to the PERSIANS.

Mean while the danger increased by the impunity of these murmurings. 1724. ASHREFF was also come back with the last caravan from KANDAHAR : and the army, who had been always extremely fond of him, now behaved in such a manner, as plainly shewed they thought him the fittest to reign. He had retreated only to avoid the jealous eye of MAGHMUD ; and the expressions of esteem and affection of the AFGHAN army, had been the chief inducements of his return from KANDAHAR. While he remained there, he lived intirely in the country, in pursuit of rural pleasures, and his own domestic affairs. But such tranquillity was not his lot ; he seemed born to move in a higher, tho' less happy sphere. During his absence, the soldiers expressed a great desire for his return. The principal officers considered the dangers to which the army would be exposed, if MAGHMUD, who had but indifferent health, should die without male issue capable of holding the reins of government ; thus, in some measure, they obliged this prince to recall ASHREFF, in order to declare him his successor to the empire.

ASHREFF having quitted his solitude, MAGHMUD was obliged to dissemble his jealousy, and entertained him for some days with all the appearances of the most tender friendship ; but he was no sooner informed of the murmurings of the troops, than he ordered ASHREFF to lodge in the palace, where he was strictly guarded. This prudent step checked the soldiers ; but did not make the sultan easy in his mind. The disgrace he lately met with in COHKILAN, and before YEZD, had weakened his power and authority. He began to be in as great fear of the mutiny of his troops, as of the revolt of the PERSIANS.

To extricate himself in this situation, required more steadiness and virtue than MAGHMUD was master of. This prince, who had been so bold in projecting, and so brave in executing, was frightened at the thought of a danger to which he had not been accustomed. Under these circumstances, he tried to obtain from heaven that light and assistance, which he no longer expected from those who had been the followers of his fortunes. A design of this nature, however commendable in itself, seemed
ed

1724. ed in his condition to argue the troubled state and weakness of his mind, rather than a sense of religion.

With this intent, MAGHMUD undertook to perform the spiritual exercises^z, which the INDIAN MAHOMMEDANS, who are more addicted to them than those of other countries, have introduced into KANDAHAR. This superstitious practice is observed, by shutting themselves up for fourteen or fifteen days in a place where no light enters; the only nourishment they take, is a little bread and water at sun-set. During this retreat, they employ their time in repeating incessantly with a strong guttural voice the word HOU, by which they denote one of the attributes of the deity. These continual cries, and the agitations of the body with which they are attended, naturally unhinge the whole frame. When by fasting and darkness the brain is disordered, they fancy they see spectres, and hear voices. Thus they take pains to confirm the very disorder of mind which puts them on such trials. They presume to pry into the secrets of providence, from an opinion, that during this penance, the devil is compelled by the agency of a superior power, to let them into the knowledge of futurity.

1725. Such was the painful exercise which MAGHMUD undertook in JANUARY this year, and for this purpose he chose a subterraneous vault. In the beginning of the next month, when he came forth, he was so pale, disfigured, and emaciated, that they hardly knew him. But this was not the worst effect of his devotion: solitude, often dangerous to a melancholy turn of thought, had, under the circumstances of his inquietude, and the strangeness of the penance, impaired his reason. He became restless and suspicious; often starting, as if the very persons most attached to his interest, had an intent to destroy him. He was in one of these fits, when it was rumoured in ISFAHAN, that SEFFIE MYRZA, son of SHAH HUSSEIN, had found means to make his escape from the seraglio, and had retired towards TURKEY. Whether the PERSIANS spread this alarm in order to intimidate the tyrant, or himself caused it to be reported; he made it a pretext to cover a new scene of the most execrable barbarity.

C H A P.

^z They call it the RIADHIAT.

C H A P. XXXI.

Cruelty of MAGHMUD in murdering SHAH HUSSEIN's children. Numerous offspring, and great voluptuousness of SHAH HUSSEIN. MAGHMUD falls into a delirium. Ceremony of the ARMENIAN priests in reading the red gospel over him. Conspiracy of the AFGHANS against him, in favour of ASHREFF. ASHREFF is elected sultan. Miserable death of MAGHMUD. Character of this prince.

HITHERTO MAGHMUD, amidst all his cruelties, had not im- 1725.
brued his hands in the blood of his ancient sovereigns. Many princes of SHAH HUSSEIN's family were confined with him in the seraglio, as the sad companions of his captivity: among whom were several brothers, three uncles, and seven nephews of that unfortunate monarch.

The tyrant's heart being now rent with anxiety for the support of his declining power, regardless of his more declining health, and approach to eternity, he resolved to sacrifice all the royal family, except HUSSEIN SHAH. The seventh of FEBRUARY was the day appointed for the execution of this bloody purpose. These victims to cruelty and a distempered mind, were assembled in the palace-yard with their hands tied behind their backs. The tyrant, attended only by a few of his most intimate confidants, began himself this horrid butchery with his sabre. There were only two sons of SHAH HUSSEIN remaining, when this unfortunate prince, hearing their cries, came running to the place of slaughter. These princes, the eldest of whom was only five years of age, flung themselves into the arms of their father. Nothing but the tenderness of a parent could have supported this prince at the sight of so sad a spectacle: he bathed his children with his tears, and put himself in the way to receive the fatal stroke. MAGHMUD, now drunk with slaughter, stepped forwards to murder these royal infants, tho' sheltered in their father's bosom: the SHAH stretched out his arm, and received the blow. Here the horrid scene was ended. At the sight of blood gushing from the wound of a king, and a man of whom this tyrant had been used to think

1725. with some reverence, heaven stopped his murdering hand. As these children were yet of so tender an age, and incapable of giving umbrage, he determined to leave them to their parent, now oppressed with such an accumulated load of misfortunes.

It is not agreed what number of princes were murdered on this occasion, but they are reckoned above an hundred. It is easy to reconcile their being yet more numerous, if we attend to the circumstances of eastern courts. Few men have carried their voluptuousness, however permitted by a particular faith, further than SHAH HUSSEIN. The year 1701, was called in PERSIA the year of virgins^a. This prince then ordered a search to be made through the whole extent of his dominions, for all the young virgins of distinguished beauty : and the commissioners appointed for this inquiry, brought all those whom they thought worthy of the harram. The governors of the provinces, knowing their master's predominant passion, paid their courts in the most prevailing manner, even till the siege of ISFAHAN, by sending him the finest girls in their province. This strong passion, or rather appetite for the sex, was sufficient to render the royal family extremely numerous ; insomuch, that in the space of a month, thirty cradles were carried into the seraglio. Besides, this monarch being more humane than any of his predecessors, put none of the princes of the royal blood to death^b. All those princes, excepting TÆHMAS and the two children already mentioned, perished on that day.

This bloody execution, instead of dispelling the fears of MAGHMUD, only contributed to increase the terrors with which he was tormented. His mind was perpetually agitated with the most frightful ideas ; and the remorse of this last act of barbarity gave him no repose. His intellects, which had been so much weakened by the austerity of his spiritual retreat, appeared to be yet more impaired ; and besides this, he had an insupportable pain in his bowels. The most skilful physicians of the court, endeavoured

^a KISVERAN.

^b It was common in later times to kill them all, insomuch that I never heard that NADIR had any children alive, at least no males, except his two sons RIZA KOULI MYRZA and NESR ALI MYRZA, who were born long before NADIR was made king.

endeavoured in vain to restore him to his senses. They then had recourse to a religious remedy. 1725.

In cases of the like nature, the ARMENIANS had been wont to engage one of their priests to read over the head of the patient, what they call the red gospel^c. This custom was received not only by those christians, but also by the greatest part of the MAHOMMEDANS of the country, who together with the ARMENIANS affirmed, that several PERSIANS affected with the same degree of madness as MAGHMUD, had been cured by this means: so that they resolved to try to work a miracle. In the beginning of APRIL, the clergy of JULFA being dressed in their sacerdotal habits, and with wax tapers lighted, went in solemn procession to the palace^d, where they were received with great respect. They passed thro' the apartment between two rows of courtiers and guards, whose modest countenance, and profound silence, expressed such a reverence for these priests, as could hardly be expected from persons of their religion. After the ceremony was performed, the clergy retired in the same order to JULFA, attended by a great number of the lords of the court.

In one of the lucid intervals of his disorder, MAGHMUD having been informed of the relief which the ARMENIANS had endeavoured to give him, he sent them two thousand tomans in specie^e, and as much in effects, promising to restore the remainder of what he had exacted from them, if he recovered his health. He did the same in regard to the DUTCH and the INDIANS. A sense of the danger he was in, having excited some sentiments of piety in his breast, he recommended himself also to the prayers of those different nations. After some hours of ease, he relapsed into a more terrible condition: his body was covered with leprosy, his flesh rotted, and seemed to fall from his bones.

Such

^c Probably some passage relating to the miracles of our Saviour. Exorcising without the use of the scriptures, it is pretended, is common in PORTUGAL.

^d The late king of PORTUGAL, at different times, caused the several bodies of the clergy in and about LISBON, to walk in procession through his chamber; and a book was published, giving an account of the manner and ceremonies of each fraternity. Whether the king's life was protracted by any miraculous interposition, is a point about which the ROMISH clergy will be most ready to determine.

^e 5000 l.

1725.

Such was the frightful condition of MAGHMUD, when news was brought that SHAH TÆHMAS had advanced at the head of a body of troops, and defeated a party of AFGHANS near KOOM, as they were marching towards CASBIN, under the command of their general SEIDAL. It was not merely the desire of taking advantage of the present conjunctures, that drew the PERSIAN army so near to ISFAHAN. Since the beginning of MAGHMUD's illness, ASHREFF had been no longer watched with the same strictness; so that he found means to enter into a correspondence with TÆHMAS. As soon as he found that things were ripe for his purpose, he sent him word that now was the time for him to ascend the throne of his ancestors; that he needed only to advance towards ISFAHAN, where every thing was in confusion by the sickness of MAGHMUD; that upon the first rumour of his approach, his friends would join him in a body; and that this step would induce part of the rebels to return to their duty, and put it out of the power of the rest to withstand him.

ASHREFF had imparted this design to the PERSIAN lords, who had been spared at the time of the massacre, with a design to ensnare them, and it was by their intervention that this correspondence was carried on. Accordingly they wrote to acquaint TÆHMAS, that the only condition ASHREFF insisted upon for himself and his party, was, that their lives, their liberty, and their effects should be sacred: thus the treaty met with no difficulty. TÆHMAS sent him a deed^f, in which he engaged under the most sacred oaths, to observe his word inviolably: after which, he advanced as far as KOOM, where meeting a body of AFGHANS commanded by SEIDAL, he put them to flight.

This new disgrace greatly alarmed the rebels. So many defeats began to weaken that reputation of bravery and success, in which their security chiefly consisted; it behoved them to stop the progress of a prince, who, taking advantage of the present conjunctures, threatened to drive them from ISFAHAN; but the confusion occasioned by MAGHMUD's illness, was an insuperable obstacle to the execution of any military projects. These
circum-

^f This is called NACHLATHEMA, probably resembling the anathema of the HEBREWS.

circumstances renewed their former ideas of revolting; hence their whole discourse soon turned on the necessity of chusing another master. 1725.

AMAN OLA, tho' considered as prime-minister and generalissimo of the sultan, became the most active of all the conspirators. He was hardly returned to ISFAHAN, when he perceived that he was strictly watched; which affronted him so extremely, that when MAGHMUD returned from his expedition into COHKILAN, he obstinately refused to go and meet him. That which confirmed his opinion of being an object of jealousy, excited his revenge also. It was not long before this time, that he was insulted to a great degree. He went out upon a common occasion, with a numerous retinue, to perform his devotions at his brother's tomb: MAGHMUD, apprehensive lest under such pretexts he should escape a second time, sent one of his officers, with orders to pierce with his lance the horse on which the general was mounted^s.

AMAN OLA was too proud to put up with such an affront. As soon as he returned, he took the opportunity of killing several fine horses belonging to MAGHMUD's stables; so that this prince was obliged to come himself in person to appease him. At this interview, they seemed to be again reconciled.

The general however meditated the sultan's destruction, and it was impossible for him to find a better opportunity. His opinion determined the generality of the AFGHANS; so that the council and the army unanimously agreed on the necessity of chusing a new sovereign. This choice, according to nearness of blood, should have fallen on HUSSEIN KHAN, brother of MAGHMUD, who was at that time in KANDAHAR, and commanded in the name of the sultan: but affairs were so critically circumstanced, that they could not wait till his arrival from so distant a country, had the army been disposed to it. ASHREFF was the most beloved, and was now chosen with an unanimous consent.

D d 2

The

^s This seems to be a capricious action, yet such as the genius of the people, and the temper of MAGHMUD renders credible.

1725. The moment this election was proclaimed, the troops ran to their arms, in order to take the new king out of custody. The ABDOLLEES, who guarded him, disputed the entrance for some time, but at length yielded.

ASHREFF, being at liberty, was proclaimed king of PERSIA by the AFGHANS on the 22d of APRIL. This prince, under the specious pretence of revenging the death of his father MIR ABDALLAH, would not accept the ensigns of royalty, till they brought him the head of their late sultan. The miserable MAGHMUD, who had hardly many hours to live, suffered the execution of this sentence, without knowing the additional misfortune into which he was fallen ^h.

Thus perished, at the early age of twenty-seven years, this destroyer of one of the fairest monarchies of ASIA, leaving the world a sad monument of human misery in the character of a prince and a conqueror. Nature had refused him those external advantages, by which great men are sometimes distinguished. He was middle-sized and clumsy; his neck was so short, that his head seemed to grow to his shoulders; he had a broad face, a flat nose, and his beard was thin, and of a red colour; his looks were wild, and his countenance austere and disagreeable; his eyes, which were blue, and a little squinting, were generally down-cast, like a man absorbed in deep thought.

He had made it a rule from his earliest youth, to supply by habit and custom his natural unfitness for bodily exercises. In this he succeeded so well, that very few excelled him either in horsemanship, or in the use of the lance. He applied himself to military exercises; and that he might not lose his dexterity in wielding the sabre, he often caused
sheep

^h It is said that such a horrid frenzy had seized him, that he tore his own body with his teeth; that this rage continued upon him for seven days, and he was just ready to expire with the wounds which he had given himself, when they put an end to his life and his misery. The Jesuits and ecclesiastics, who have had the greatest share in collecting this account, might aggravate this part of the story; but as Providence does, I believe, interpose sometimes to punish such murderers, we may suppose that he was marked out as an example of divine vengeance.

sheep to be brought to him with their feet tied, and after they had been hung up, he cut off their heads at a blow¹. 1725.

To these talents, which were common to the generality of his nation, he joined some virtues more worthy of a sovereign. Tho' his soldiers in their discontent reproached him with an immoderate love of women, which seems to prove how far prejudices may transport men, he was very chaste; and is reported to have had only one wife, to whom he was ever constant. He slept little; and in his campaigns suffered hardships with great indifference. He was so vigilant, as often to visit the centinels in the night, not only in the field, but also in ISFAHAN. In labour he was indefatigable, in danger intrepid; and what is properly the characteristic of the man of honour more than of the conqueror, he was a strict observer of his word towards those for whom he ever professed a friendship: he shewed a great regard for AMAN OLA upon that account, even when he was convinced that this general was contriving his ruin.

These qualities procured him respect, but he was too much feared to be beloved. His soldiers accused him of a severity in military discipline; they charged him also with avarice, and that he had deprived them of the booty for which they had bravely encountered the greatest dangers: but above all they could not forgive his having said in the first emotions of his resentment after the defeat of YEZD, that he wished they were as great beggars as when they first came into PERSIA, that they might fight as bravely as they did then. They could perhaps with more reason have reproached him with want of conduct, which was the chief cause of his miscarrying. To this might be added his cruelty to his enemies; his want of fortitude under his disgraces; and if success had not in some measure justified his enterprize of conquering ISFAHAN, it would have appeared rash and extravagant.

Such was the man, whom posterity will hardly number among the eastern heroes, tho' the blood he spilt, and the mischiefs he created, will give

¹ He is represented also so strong, as to cut the body of a sheep in two at a stroke; but these stories are generally exaggerated.

1725. give him a rank among the ravagers of the earth. He sat only two years and a half on the throne of PERSIA: but this short time was too long for his reputation as a conqueror, and he died very seasonably for the interest of his nation. That inconsiderate temerity, which constituted the chief part of his character, was fit only for making conquests; to secure them, other qualifications were necessary, which he did not possess.

PART

PART VIII.
THE
REVOLUTIONS OF PERSIA,

FROM THE
ACCESSION OF ASHREFF TO THE
THRONE OF PERSIA IN 1725,
TILL THE
PEACE CONCLUDED BETWEEN THIS PRINCE AND THE
TURKS IN 1727.

CHAP. XXXII.

Character of ASHREFF: his hypocrisy and artful behaviour to SHAH HUSEIN. The princes of the blood, who had been murdered, buried at KOOM. ASHREFF punishes the conspirators who placed him on the throne. His behaviour towards the mother of MAGHMUD. His cruelty to his own brother. He endeavours to render himself popular, by the mildness of his administration in general.

THE qualifications wanting in MAGHMUD, were for the most 1725;
part united in the person of ASHREFF, who was justly considered as the properest person to possess the throne. He was naturally sober, courageous, active, and vigilant. He had been inured to hardships from his earliest life; and having acquired the accomplishments of a statesman, he had learnt at the same time the art of dissimulation, and affected being moderate and upright: among the eastern war-

1725. riors he also passed for a consummate general. Upon the whole it may be said, that in ASHREFF were joined the valour and military virtues of MIR MAGHMUD, to the moderation and cunning of MIR VAIS.

The resistance which the partisans of ASHREFF met with at the royal palace, served as a pretext for this new sultan to remove some of his enemies. The very same day he caused the guards of the late sultan to be put to the sword; and the ministers and intimate confidants of that prince underwent the same fate.

The KOULAR AGASSI^k, named ALMAS, was too much attached to MAGHMUD's interest to expect he should be excepted out of the number of the proscribed; therefore he endeavoured to save himself by flight. He was overtaken, and brought back to ISFAHAN, where they put him to the rack, in hopes of obliging him to discover the treasures which he was supposed to have concealed. The unfortunate ALMAS bore these torments with great constancy; but as soon as the executioners left him, he slew his wife, and then stabbed himself, to avoid the repetition of such unworthy and cruel treatment.

Of all the officers whom MAGHMUD favoured with his confidence, none had done so much honour to his choice as ALMAS. He never used the ascendant which he had over his master, to any other purpose, than to soften the ferocity of his natural disposition, and divert him from barbarous resolutions. He had a soul generous, compassionate, and liberal, of which he gave repeated instances. Far from endeavouring to accumulate riches, he even refused to accept of presents, tho' this method of acquiring wealth is authorized by the practice of ASIA. The EUROPEANS considered him as their protector, and joined the AFGHANS and the PERSIANS in bewailing his death. Even ASHREFF himself was moved at it, or affected to appear so, in order to avoid the censure, which the fate of a man so generally esteemed must have thrown upon him in the beginning of his reign.

The first impressions in disfavour of ASHREFF, were in some measure effaced by his subsequent conduct. He had hardly received the ensigns of royalty,

^k Chief of the slaves.

royalty, when he waited on SHAH HUSSEIN, and expatiating on the ill 1725
consequences of MAGHMUD's ambition, pressed him to re-ascend the
throne, which none but himself could lawfully fill. This monarch,
naturally of a timid disposition, was rendered more circumspect by his
present situation, and quickly saw into the artifice of this new TIBE-
RIUS. He therefore made answer, "That he had too deep a respect
" for the decrees of Providence, which had obliged him to abdicate the
" supreme power, to accept of such offers, though suggested by an un-
" exampled generosity; that since he had descended from the throne of
" his ancestors, heaven had opened his eyes in regard to the vanity of
" human grandeur; and therefore he now preferred the sweets of an
" obscure retreat, to the splendor of his former condition, in which he
" had always experienced an alloy of bitterness and sorrow." He took
this occasion however to complain of the little regard which MAGHMUD
shewed to his personal wants, and of the great cruelty exercised towards
his family; then begging the new sultan to be kinder to him, he invited
him, after the example of his predecessor, to marry one of the princesses
his daughters.

SHAH HUSSEIN having thus solicited his enemy to possess his throne,
without hesitation granted him a formal act of abdication. ASHREFF
then took the title of king, and to convince SHAH HUSSEIN of the regard
he paid to his representations, he allowed him fifty tomans^m a week for
his household; whereas, in the former reign, no more had been paid
monthly. He likewise gave him the direction of the buildings, which
were carrying on within the inclosure of the palace; and after repudi-
ating his wife, he married one of the princesses his daughters, whom
MAGHMUD had left in the harram, together with other females of the
royal blood.

To render the memory of his predecessor odious, as well as to alleviate
the affliction of the unfortunate HUSSEIN, ASHREFF caused the dead bodies
of the princes, who were still left above ground in the court where they
had

1725. had been massacred, to be put into coffins, and conveyed at his own expenceⁿ, with a funeral pomp to KOOM, the antient burying place of the PERSIAN kings. With this melancholy caravan, he sent some rich carpets to decorate the mausoleums, and a thousand tomans to be distributed among the dervises, and poor of the place. The caravan was received at the gates of the palace by great numbers of people, who attended the procession, with all the tokens of the deepest sorrow, to the further end of the suburbs: after which, it was conveyed under an escort of AFGHANS to KOOM, where the scene of lamentation was again renewed.

The officer who commanded at KOOM, deposited the bodies in the mosque, and shewed a great regard to the AFGHAN officer who had attended the convoy; but in compliance with the PERSIAN custom of abusing the messengers of bad news, a GEORGIAN of the company was very ill treated^o.

ASHREFF had not been eight days upon the throne, when he shewed by a bold stroke of politics, that he looked upon his authority as perfectly established. He ordered those who were concerned in the conspiracy which placed him on the throne, to be arrested; and affecting the appearance of justice in preference to gratitude, he confiscated all their estates, put some of them to death, and imprisoned the rest.

Under the colour of justice, this prince thus endeavoured to establish his own security; but he had also a further aim. By this blow, he removed several of the principal officers, whose turbulent and enterprising spirit rendered them objects of jealousy; he likewise filled his coffers with the riches which the conspirators had acquired since the taking of ISFAHAN.

The proud AMAN OLA, who had pretended to share the throne with MAGHMUD, was among the number of those who perished; the consideration of his daring intrepidity, as well as of his riches, hastened his fate. He had been generalissimo and prime minister of the usurper, and these employments

ⁿ They were carried on camels.

^o Some accounts say his eyes were cut out, which seems to be so unjust and barbarous an action, as hardly to be credible, since this person was in no degree faulty.

employments afforded him an opportunity of glutting his avarice ; so that 1725.
his treasures were hardly inferior to those of the crown. This will not appear improbable, if it be considered that the very presents which he received at his entering upon the ministry, amounted to nine thousand to-mans^p, and that he obtained the confiscated estates of most of the PERSIAN lords who had been massacred under the last reign.

An INDIAN of CABUL, formerly governor of the late sultan, and afterwards raised to the dignity of high priest^q, was, next to AMAN OLA, the richest man at court. By his prudence, and the strength of his genius, he passed for a second ZOROASTER among the credulous vulgar, who attributed the greatest part of the success of the war to his sorcery. The respect which MAGHMUD paid him, increased his credit ; for this prince used to do nothing without his advice, continuing to behave towards him in the same respectful manner as when he was under his tutition : he always advanced half way to meet him, with his arms crossed on his breast ; he then kissed his hands, and never attempted to take his place till this INDIAN was first seated.

From these circumstances, there was no room to believe that the MI-ANGI was concerned in the conspiracy ; he was not indeed suspected of any such design ; but his great possessions, so much out of character for a priest, rendered him guilty. ASHREFF however went no farther than the confiscating of his estate ; he even promised to send him back by the first opportunity to KANDAHAR, with as much money as he should have occasion for, to spend the remainder of his days in ease and quiet.

The reputation which ZEBERDEST KHAN had acquired by the siege of SHIRASS, and his prudent conduct in the government of that city, which had been conferred on him by MAGHMUD, exempted him also in some degree from the fate of the rest. His person however was seized, and his goods confiscated : but the sultan being sensible of his moderation and military abilities, sent him soon after to his government, with a liberty of taking twenty thousand tomans^r out of his own confiscated estate.

E e 2

This

^p 22,500 l.^q The person whom the TURKS call MUFTI, and the PERSIANS MULLAH BASHI, the AFGHANS nominate MIANGI.^r 50,000 l.

1725. This general was the only one that had his liberty restored to him; and of all the persons of note either in the army or at court, none but SEIDAL, the same whom SHAH TÆHMAS had lately routed, and MAHOMMED NISCHAN, grand master of the ceremonies, remained unmolested, either in their persons or effects. The latter had been always upon terms of friendship with ASHREFF, and was the chief person who solicited his return from KANDAHAR.

MAGHMUD's mother had stooped to marry a simple officer of the guards, and could not be prevailed upon to quit her own country, till her nephew ASHREFF was upon the point of setting out for ISFAHAN. The desire of seeing her son in all the splendour of his regal power, then determined her to undertake the journey. The PERSIANS, so much accustomed to pomp and shew, were greatly surprized to see the widow of the famous MIR VAIS, and the mother of their sovereign, mounted on one of the camels of the caravan, and entering the capital of a kingdom, subject to her son, without attendants.

The entreaties which this lady had used, to prevail on ASHREFF to return to ISFAHAN, were not the only marks of her affection towards him, it was chiefly at her solicitation that MAGHMUD spared his life. Gratitude for benefits received, seldom makes such deep impressions, as to prevent our resentments, when those benefits cease. On the contrary, among men of base minds, it adds a poignancy to real or imaginary injuries. No sooner was ASHREFF seated on the throne, than he caused this lady to be confined a whole night in the palace-yard, where the dead bodies of the princes, massacred by her son, still lay above-ground. It was presumed this punishment was inflicted for her having refused to solicit his releasement. He did not however intend to carry his resentment farther: for after this wanton penance, he treated her with kindness, and in a manner suitable to her rank, promising to send her with a considerable treasure to KANDAHAR.

The severity, which ASHREFF shewed to his younger brother, was much greater. This prince, being apprehensive that according to the custom

custom of PERSIA he should be confined in the seraglio, tried to make his escape to KANDAHAR. Being taken, he was deprived of his sight, and then shut up in the very place to which he had shewn so great an aversion. A son of MAGHMUD, yet in his cradle, was treated in the same manner; and as the mother, who was then pregnant, survived the sultan her husband only eight days, it was presumed that this princess was poisoned by the orders of the new king. 1725.

Such a series of cruelty, did not alienate the minds of the people. They looked upon the misfortune of those princes, with the massacre of the guards, ministers, and favourites of MAGHMUD, as an act of prudence, authorized by custom. The justice which appeared in punishing the conspirators, made this conduct pass for an act of generosity. Thus the new sultan secured his power, and took possession of almost all the riches that had been amassed in the pillaging of ISFAHAN, without forfeiting his reputation for moderation and equity.

ASHREFF was indeed ambitious of the affection, not only of his own nation, but likewise of the PERSIANS. For this purpose, immediately upon his accession to the throne, he distributed money among his soldiers; and established so exact a discipline, that the shops were all kept open by his orders, from the very evening of MAGHMUD's death.

He imposed no new tax, neither on the natives nor foreigners, but contented himself with causing the sums which MAGHMUD had restored during his illness, to be brought back to the exchequer; pretending, that as this prince was then delirious, he was incapable of making any such donations.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXXIII.

ASHREFF endeavours to obtain the acknowledgment of his sovereignty in KANDAHAR. He forms a design of seizing the person of SHAH TÆHMAS^s; who makes his escape into MAZANDERAN. ASHREFF takes KOOM. He massacres the PERSIAN lords, who had disclosed his designs upon TÆHMAS.

1725. **A**SHREFF having thus settled affairs in the capital, began to establish his authority in the more distant parts of the empire. His first care was to obtain an acknowledgment of his sovereignty in the kingdom of KANDAHAR. With this view, he privately sent several officers with orders to join all his party in the country, in order to excite some disturbance, by means of which they might seize or destroy HUSSEIN KHAN, the brother of the late usurper MAGHMUD. What steps those emissaries took on this occasion are not known; but it is certain that the attempt proved abortive.

Nor did he succeed better in a scheme of greater importance. He had hardly passed from the prison to the throne, when this sudden change of fortune induced him to avail himself of the correspondence into which he had entered with SHAH TÆHMAS, to make a vigorous effort to seize the person of his competitor. For this end, as he could not impose on the father by an offer of the diadem, he sent a magnificent embassy to the son, making almost the same proposals. The deputies had orders to explain to him what had passed relating to this subject; to persuade him that their master persisted in these sentiments; and that he desired a place might be appointed for an interview, to regulate their respective interests, so that they might jointly engage in such measures as were most suitable to re-establish peace and good order in the empire. These deputies were charged with a present for TÆHMAS, of ten beautiful horses richly caparisoned, like those which the kings of PERSIA usually ride.

At

^s TÆHMAS is called SHAH and prince indifferently; he had taken the name of SHAH, tho' his regal authority can hardly be said to have been established.

At the same time, the artful ASHREFF dispatched circular letters to every place, which acknowledged the authority of TÆHMAS, to notify his pacific measures to the commanding officers, and to assure them that the AFGHANS would commit no act of hostility before this interview. 1725.

While the embassadors were upon the road, TÆHMAS not knowing of the death of MAGHMUD, was advanced as far as CASHAN. Here he met with SEIDAL, who flattering himself with the hopes of revenge, had marched with a more numerous body of forces than he had with him at his former defeat. These two armies attacked each other with great vigour; but fortune having declared a second time against the AFGHANS, they were compelled to give way, and at length were totally routed.

ASHREFF however determined to pursue his political schemes. The PERSIAN lords, of whom we have made mention, ventured to write jointly to TÆHMAS, informing him of the death of the usurper, and of what had passed since that time at ISFAHAN. And as they were apprehensive, that the real motive of the proposed interview was to draw this prince into a snare, they recommended to him to be upon his guard.

Unluckily for TÆHMAS, the bearer of this letter was stopped by some of the AFGHANS that were retreating after the engagement, and carried before SEIDAL; this general secured him, and upon his arrival at ISFAHAN, delivered him into the hands of ASHREFF, together with the letters he had found upon him.

In the mean while, the embassador sent by ASHREFF returned with an answer, that TÆHMAS, who had retired towards CASBIN, had chosen the plains of VARAMI^{*} for the interview. ASHREFF having received this intelligence, set out immediately with a body of 12000 men; and arrived first at the place of assignation.

TÆHMAS was advancing, on the first of AUGUST, without any mistrust, with no more than 3000 men; when he received advice, that ASHREFF was followed by a much greater number of troops than they had mutually

^{*} This place is between KOOM and TÆHIRAN.

1725. tually agreed to take for their escort. This intelligence having opened TÆHMAS's eyes, he considered what measures to pursue. He had no reason to doubt of the superior number of the AFGHANS; but the desire of being revenged of their perfidy, and the confidence he had acquired by his late victories, almost tempted him to try the fortune of a battle.

The troops he had with him, were of two different sorts, PERSIANS* and KHAJARS. The latter, who were the most numerous, insisted, that in consideration of the services which they had already rendered, and still were disposed to render, the prince would promise, that in case of success, the ATHEMAT DOULET should be always chosen from their body. The KEZELBACHS opposed such an innovation. This dispute, which seemed to be very ill timed, divided this little army into two opposite factions. TÆHMAS perceived that his authority was too feeble to quash the disturbance, and therefore resolved to retreat. But curiosity seeming to prevail over fear, he kept only a thousand men with him, and ordered one of his general officers to march with the other two thousand, to reconnoitre the rebels. AMUR ASLAN KHAN^w, his general, had soon demonstrative proofs of what he was sent to discover. The AFGHANS having already passed the limits agreed upon, were in full march; and the number and disposition of their troops plainly shewed that their design was to surround the SHAH. The KHAN perceiving their intention, dispatched some horsemen to acquaint this prince, that nothing but a speedy flight could save him from the treachery of the enemy.

This advice arrived at the very interval that ASHREFF, having been informed by his spies of the place where this prince then was, had detached a body of two thousand five hundred men, with orders to make a long winding, and cut off the prince's retreat. TÆHMAS perceiving the danger into which his credulity had engaged him, abandoned his troops, and fled to TÆHIRAN, attended only by two hundred men.

AMUR ASLAN KHAN, who was soon hemmed in by the AFGHANS, put himself in a posture of defence. The engagement was obstinate: this
brave

* KEZELBACHS.
RESHD in 1748.

^w The man by whose orders the BRITISH factory was pillaged in

brave general twice repulsed his enemies, but at length gave way to numbers; he was in the utmost danger of being crushed, when the approach of night preserved him, and as many of his soldiers as could save themselves by flight, and the favour of the neighbouring mountains. In a few days he arrived at TÆHIRAN. 1725.

TÆHMAS, who had retired thither, being apprehensive lest the enemy should follow him, continued his march with great expedition towards MAZANDERAN. The ruggedness of the mountains, which surround this province, has often rendered it the azylum of the PERSIAN kings: here this prince took shelter, followed by his general AMUR ASLAN KHAN, and those whose horses could bear the fatigue of so precipitate a march.

The prudence of this conduct was soon proved by the event. ASHREFF, being persuaded that TÆHMAS was still at TÆHIRAN, resolved to surprize him before he could have time to remove from thence. With this intent, he compelled the peasants to serve him as guides, and soon appeared with his army before the walls of the town. Upon discovering that TÆHMAS was fled, he ordered his troops to attack the place; but the besieged behaved so well, that he was obliged to abandon his enterprize.

Being greatly irritated at his disappointment, and the laborious march he had made in vain, he directed his course southward towards SAVA, which surrendered by capitulation. He afterwards marched to KOOM, a city of great importance, and before which he must in all probability have miscarried, had the inhabitants been prepared for his reception; but the want of provisions obliged them to capitulate, after a siege of eight days. The sultan, more politic than his predecessor, observed the conditions of his treaties very strictly. By the reduction of KOOM, he became master of twenty pieces of cannon, and three elephants. He also found some treasure belonging to TÆHMAS, together with the wife, and part of the court of this prince. However, his fortune here did not compensate for the failure of his plot; and he returned to ISFAHAN greatly vexed at his disappointment, and uneasy at the accounts he now received of the new enterprizes of the OTTOMAN court.

1725. The apprehension of being charged with cruelty, which had rendered the memory of his predecessor so odious, was the only motive which had induced the sultan to spare the lives of the authors of the letter already mentioned; and though this had been intercepted, it was presumed that others of the same nature might have raised a suspicion of his designs. Now he was returned, he thought it essential to his preservation to exterminate this remnant of the nobility; especially, as he would be ever subject to their treasonable correspondence. Accordingly he assembled them at his country-palace of FERHABAD, under pretence of a hunting match; and having convicted them of holding a correspondence with his enemies, he condemned them to be beheaded; which sentence was executed upon the spot.

C H A P. XXXIV.

Death of PETER the GREAT. Deplorable state of the PERSIAN monarchy. The TURKS take TAVRIS and GANJA. ACHMED BASHA marches an army, and takes possession of LORISTAN. Division among the BACTIARIS. The VALI of LORISTAN makes an incursion into the territory of BAGDAT.

THE conquests which the TURKS had made the preceding year, and the indolence into which the RUSSIANS seemed to have fallen, with respect to PERSIA, gave the port a superiority, at which these new allies began to take umbrage. The inconveniencies which the TURKS apprehended in waging war against the AFGHANS, of the sect of SUNNI, and the very name of the emperor of RUSSIA, kept the TURKS in the resolution of adhering to their engagements, when they received advice of the death of that monarch. General ROMANZOFF*, envoy extraordinary of RUSSIA for the ratification of the treaty, and commissary for regulating the limits in PERSIA, was sensible of the difficulties which this accident would create in the execution of his commission. However, he kept his
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* I am not sure that he was at this time a general, tho' he was so afterwards.

own counsel, and endeavoured to persuade the TURKS, that the empress 1725. CATHARINE had adopted such measures, as would prevent the death of his much lamented master from making any alteration in the system of affairs in the RUSSIAN empire.

The grand vizir pretended to be convinced of the truth of what he said; and declared, that the intention of the grand signior was to conform exactly to the engagements, which he had entered into with the deceased monarch; and therefore, he would immediately dispatch the commissaries, who were to regulate the limits upon the spot.

This minister, nevertheless, under the pretence of putting the port in possession of the provinces, which were fallen to her share by the partition treaty, had no other view than to extend the frontiers of the OTTOMAN empire. For this purpose, he made extraordinary preparations, that the armies which were to act this year against PERSIA, might be in a condition of making new conquests.

This distressed monarchy was thus a prey to several different enemies at one and the same time. The port had stripped her of GEORGIA, almost of all ARMENIA, and part of ADERBEITZAN. The CZAR had made himself master of the western coast of the CASPIAN, except SHAMAKIE, which was in the hands of the LESGEES. KHORASAN, KHERMAN, KANDAHAR, and the governments of ISFAHAN and SHIRASS, were in the power of the AFGHANS or their associates. The authority of SHAH TÆHMAS was acknowledged only in MAZANDERAN, ASTRABAD, and some few places of IRAC AGEMI. The rest of the provinces which had not openly revolted, either despised the orders of this prince, or formed independent armies, which attacked indiscriminately the RUSSIANS, the TURKS, and the AFGHANS.

These troubles soon reached some of the provinces lately conquered by the TURKS. The sovereign^y of the LESGEES, who had put himself under the protection of the port, shook off this new yoke, and attacked HAHDGEE DAUD, who held SHAMAKIE under the OTTOMAN domination.

1725. nion. The province of SHIRVAN was thus divided between these two parties, and the SHEMKALL, who had submitted to the authority of the RUSSIAN emperor, pillaged at large.

Whilst the LESGEES gave proof of their inconstancy, the Janissaries of the garrison of ERIVAN, mutinied against ARIFI ACHMED. In consequence of this revolt, they plundered his palace, and the grand signior's chest. This general was wounded in the fray, and saved himself by flight.

This insurrection was not however attended with those consequences, which might naturally be apprehended. The troops soon repented of the violences they had committed, and returned to their duty. They recalled their general; they sacrificed the authors of the disorder; and brought him home in triumph. The port, however, always disposed to shew a particular regard to the Janissaries, appointed ARIFI ACHMED governor of ERIVAN; but gave the command of the army to SAVI MUSTAFA, BASHA of ERZEROUM.

The campaign was opened in MAY, and ABDERRAHMAM BEG, son of ABDALLAH KOUPROLI, BASHA of VAN, gained some advantages over the PERSIANS, on the side of TAVRIS. After which, he made himself master of the city of MARAND, and of the fortress of ZONOUS, without any resistance.

About this time, LATIF KHAN, a nephew of SHAH HUSSEIN, upon the credit of his astrologers, appeared before HAMADAN with some troops, and according to their prediction he entered the town, but in a different manner from what he expected; for he was carried off by a detachment belonging to the garrison, and led into the city as a prisoner of war.

These advantages were followed by conquests of greater importance. The port, not having yet succeeded against TAVRIS, determined to send a sufficient number of troops to reduce that place, where the number of the inhabitants fit to bear arms was very large, and who, from a generous resolution of defending themselves to the last extremity, had sent
I their

their families and most valuable effects into the mountains of GHILAN. 1725. The command of the army designed against this city was given to ABDALLAH KOUPROLI, BASHA of VAN: eleven thousand TARTARS, who passed over into ASIA, by the way of CONSTANTINOPLE, were ordered to join him; and also the BEGLERBEG of NATOLIA, with the troops of his government. This general having collected a body of seventy thousand men, did not think it necessary to wait for these reinforcements; but put himself at the head of his army, and appeared before this great city the thirtieth of JULY.

The PERSIAN general did not wait within ruinous walls, but took the field as soon as the TURKS appeared in sight. His army consisted chiefly of the inhabitants, who understood the use of arms, but had not been accustomed to military discipline; however, they determined to force their enemies to an engagement, before they had time to entrench themselves.

The BASHA saw into their design: as soon as he perceived that the number of those who had marched out of the town amounted to twenty or thirty thousand men, he fell upon them with the fury of an enraged enemy, in resentment of what had passed the preceding year. The PERSIANS stood their ground; and fresh succours continually pouring in, they fought on both sides with equal bravery till night, when the PERSIANS, being routed on every side, flung themselves in the utmost confusion into the town.

The TURKS were so eager in the pursuit, that they entered pell-mell with them, where the fight was renewed again with incredible obstinacy. The inhabitants had thrown up intrenchments in the nine different quarters, of which this great city is composed, and defended themselves with the same bravery and resolution, which they had hitherto displayed on all occasions². The TURKS were four days and nights before they made themselves masters of seven of those entrenchments, notwithstanding they made repeated assaults: at length, on the third of AUGUST, about twenty thousand

² The taking of TAVRIS, as related by the TURKS, seems to be exaggerated with regard to the number and bravery of the PERSIANS, as if they meant by this circumstance to render the conquest the more distinguished.

1725. thousand men, who had retired to the two last entrenchments, finding themselves unable to hold out any longer, offered to capitulate; in consequence of which, they were permitted to retire to ARDEVILLE, with what effects they could carry along with them.

Few sieges have been so bloody as this. The PERSIANS lost near thirty thousand men, and the TURKS about twenty thousand; among whom were OSMAN BASHA of OURFA, who commanded the right wing of the army, the BASHA of CARAMANIA, and many other officers of distinction.

The news of so important a conquest, was an agreeable surprize to the grand signior; and the more, as it was hardly believed that ABDALLAH KOUPROLI had as yet undertaken the siege. Soon after, the fortrefs of LORE surrendered to SAVI MUSTAFA. The BASHA of BAGDAT made himself master of several small towns^a, situated within a few days journey of HAMADAN, in the road to the capital.

Nothing more was wanting to complete the prosperity of the OTTOMAN court, than to be revenged of the affront which one of her generals had received before the walls of GANJA in 1723. SAVI MUSTAFA, who had conquered LORE, was charged with this new expedition. Towards the end of AUGUST, he besieged the place with an army of forty thousand men, and after two days resistance, the commanding officer surrendered by capitulation.

SAVI MUSTAFA then marched into SHIRVAN, in hopes to subdue the LESGEES; but he did not succeed in this expedition: for the weather setting in very sharp, his soldiers deserted in such numbers, that he was obliged to retire. To make amends for this disappointment, AHR submitted voluntarily to ABDALLAH BASHA, who confirmed the governor in his office.

Whilst this general and SAVI MUSTAFA were carrying on their conquests in the northern provinces, a third army was ordered by the port to

^a These are called ASSITAN, GEANGERE, FIROUZABAD, places which I do not find in any map, so imperfect are these with respect to PERSIA.

to force their way to ISFAHAN. This was commanded by ACHMED, 1725. now BASHA of BAGDAT, who availing himself of the present circumstances, had entered LORISTAN, and was advancing towards HOROMABAD, capital^b of the country.

ALI MERDAN KHAN, VALI of this province, was in no condition to make head against the enemy, for all his troops did not exceed fifteen thousand men: he therefore retired into CHUSISTAN. His example was followed by the inhabitants of HOROMABAD, insomuch that when ACHMED appeared before this town, he found it intirely abandoned. He entered without resistance, and with the same facility subdued the rest of the province.

In the mean while^c, the BASHA of MOSUL made incursions into the country of the BACTIARIS, with a body of troops subject to the orders of ACHMED. These people are divided into two tribes, one called CHAHAR LING, and the other EFH LING; they pretend, that under CONSTANTINE the GREAT they embraced the christian religion, which they have since renounced. They live all the year in tents. It is said, that the BACTIARIS joined to the LORIANS, would have been able to raise the siege of ISFAHAN, in the late revolution by the AFGHANS, if the antipathy which reigns between these two neighbouring people, had not prevented their acting in concert upon that important occasion: this spirit of dissension brought on the disgrace of both nations. We have seen how the VALI of LORISTAN abandoned his country upon the approach of the TURKS. SEFFIE, KHAN of the BACTIARIS, took a less prudent step, tho' in appearance more generous: he marched with all the troops he could collect to meet the enemy; the fortune of the day was for a long while dubious;

^b DE L'ISLE calls the capital by the same name as the province, viz. LORISTAN. ^c AHOVAS seems to be the proper name of the capital of this country, if it is neighbouring to LORISTAN; tho' in page 112. HONSAR near ISFAHAN is represented as the capital. BACTIARIA is a country, which does not appear in maps under that name. It is sometimes confounded with the antient BACTRIA, a country quite remote, bordering on INDEPENDANT TARTARY, on the eastern side of the CASPIAN SEA. DE L'ISLE has a BACTRIANI to the north of GEORGIA. We seem to be left pretty much in the dark with respect to the countries bordering on ARABIA; but this in question may probably be meant of that country, of which AHOVAS is the capital, according to DE L'ISLE.

1725. dubious; but the PERSIANS at length gave way to numbers, and saved themselves by flight.

After this victory, the BASHA of MOSUL advanced within four and twenty leagues of ISFAHAN; and would doubtless have approached nearer, if he had not met with the advanced posts of the AFGHANS on the road, against whom, as there was no declaration of war, he did not presume to commit any act of hostility. The BACTIARIS, who were retired with their flocks into the mountains, sought for an opportunity to revenge their defeat; and harraßed the TURKS by frequent and sudden attacks. The BASHA, unaccustomed to this method of fighting, was more disposed to retreat than pursue his victory, when he was informed that the VALI of LORISTAN, tho' unable to stand against the TURKISH army, carried the war into their country, by which means he soon obliged them to abandon this province. The KHANS of AHOVAS and SUSTER, convinced of the facility of plundering a country, which by the BASHA's excursions was left defenceless, joined him, and formed an army of near 20,000 men. They entered the territories of BAGDAT, and spread terror and desolation over all the country, as far as the capital. The two daughters of the VALI, who fought by his side at the battle of GULNABAD, were induced by their filial duty and military genius to attend their father in this expedition; as they had also done in a late incursion towards BASSORA, from whence their father returned loaded with a considerable booty.

The prudent conduct of the VALI produced the effect which he expected. As soon as ACHMED BASHA heard that the enemy were ravaging his government, he sent orders to the BASHA of MOSUL to re-join his army, and left the VALI at liberty to return home by another rout. The TURKS lost a great number of men in this expedition: all the advantage they reaped from it, was the empty glory of having marched within three days journey of ISFAHAN.

C H A P. XXXV.

The RUSSIANS uneasy at the conquests made by the TURKS. Success of the RUSSIAN arms in PERSIA. The TURKS evade settling the limits of their conquests with the RUSSIAN resident. ASHREFF sends an ambassador to the port. Character of this minister. He is admitted to an audience of the grand vizir. His conferences with the TURKISH ministers.

THE rapidity of these conquests gave great uneasiness to the RUSSIAN ministers. Since the taking of TAVRIS, the grand signior affected less condescension towards that court; and now the important successes of the last campaign, together with the slow progress of these new allies, greatly diminished the regard which had been shewn them before the death of the RUSSIAN emperor. 1725.

The inaction of the RUSSIANS in PERSIA, was owing to the circumstances of the court of ST. PETERSBURG. There was some reason to fear, that the throne was not so securely established, as to venture upon the pursuit of conquests in ASIA, by which nothing could be gained; and which, it is probable, were never meant on any other account than to check the TURKS. And as for the SWEDES and other neighbouring powers, being no longer restrained by the reputation which the CZAR had acquired, they might be the more disposed to seize the first favourable opportunity to renew or form pretensions; for which sovereigns are never without reasons.

The RUSSIANS, however, during this time had obtained some advantages in PERSIA. MATUSKIN, one of their lieutenant-generals, having been informed, that the former vizir of RESHD had built a fort on the confines of GHILAN towards MAZANDERAN, with a design of molesting his foragers; he sent a body of troops thither in the month of JUNE, and drove the enemy into MAZANDERAN.

The vizir afterwards assembled his forces, and marched in order to fight the enemy; but the RUSSIAN infantry soon put them to flight. The

1725. demolition of the fort, and the taking of LAHIJAN^e, were the fruits of this victory. The SHAMKALL of TARKOU, having submitted with reluctance to the yoke imposed on him by the CZAR, engaged some of the neighbouring princes in his quarrel: he took the field at the head of an army, but soon had reason to repent this step; for a body of RUSSIANS attacked him the twenty-sixth of SEPTEMBER, defeated, and drove him into the mountains. TARKOU, and several villages belonging to its dependancy, were pillaged and burnt; and his allies lost on this occasion one of their princes, with four of their chiefs.

But these advantages could enter into no comparison with the conquests made by the TURKS, who being now become masters of the several provinces adjudged to them by the partition treaty, reproached the RUSSIANS for keeping on the defensive, when, according to the treaty, they ought to have acted with vigour, in order to drive the AFGHANS out of PERSIA.

ROMANZOFF, the RUSSIAN minister at the port, was too expert a politician not to foresee the uneasiness he should be exposed to: he therefore solicited to go and settle upon the spot the respective limits. At length he had a conference upon this subject, when the REYS EFFENDI represented, that the season was too far advanced; and moreover, that as the principal articles of the partition treaty were to be performed in SHIRVAN, it would be requisite to give time to SAVI MUSTAFA to subdue the people of that province, who had lately blockaded SHAMAKIE. Thus the general ROMANZOFF had the mortification to see his journey postponed till the next year.

The port, not chusing to carry things to extremity, affected a condescension towards the RUSSIANS. The inhabitants of ARDEVILLE had sent deputies to ABDALLAH BASHA, soliciting the protection of the grand signior. The TURKISH general knowing that this city was beyond the limits prescribed by the treaty, would not send any troops thither without orders. The grand vizir communicated this affair to the envoy and resident of RUSSIA, assuring them that these proposals should be rejected. This appearance of sincerity, already contradicted by the invasion of LO-
RISTAN

RISTAN and other conquests, did not last long. ABDALLAH BASHA received 1725. secret orders, in consequence of which he took possession of ARDEVILLE, as it were provisionally, and under a pretence that the rebels had a design upon it. OIROUMI, a city in the neighbourhood of TAVRIS, had lately imitated the same example, by submitting voluntarily to the TURKS. The irregularity of this proceeding, occasioned fresh complaints. The RUSSIANS alledged moreover, that the port had committed a new violation of the treaty, by receiving an ambassador from the rebel AFGHANS.

ASHREEF was so terrified at the progress of the OTTOMAN arms, that he addressed a manifesto to the inhabitants of MIANA, and some other frontier towns, exhorting them to submit to his dominion; after which, he attempted to reconcile by treaty, what he could hardly obtain in the field. The negotiation was committed to ABDUL AZIZ KHAN an AFGHAN, who from a simple mule-driver, had, by his courage and resolution, attained to the posts of colonel and commandant of JULFA. He set out from ISFAHAN in SEPTEMBER; but having been detained twenty days at HOROMABAD by ACHMED BASHA, and twelve at HAMADAN, he did not reach SCUTARI till the twentieth of JANUARY this year.

The arrival of this ambassador, induced the OTTOMAN court to believe, that the AFGHANS, intimidated by the success of the TURKISH arms in the last campaign, would acknowledge the grand signior as IMAM^f, and sue for peace at any rate. However, it was determined in council, that this minister should be received only as a simple messenger, deputed by a prince of the same religion as the TURKS. ABDUL AZIZ expected an audience as an ambassador from a king of the sect of the SUNNIS; but perceiving that the court did not intend to acknowledge him in any public character, he pretended to be ill, and desired to be removed to CONSTANTINOPLE. As it was the intention of the port to grant him an audience, they easily consented to his request, which perhaps had been suggested to him; but instead of a galley, according to the custom observed towards ambassadors, he was sent in a gondola.

^f The supreme head, both in spirituals and temporals, of the MAHOMMEDANS. See page 175.

1726. The ninth of FEBRUARY, he was conducted to the audience of the grand vizir, with more ceremonies than he could reasonably expect, as the agent of a chief, whose sovereignty was not acknowledged by any crowned head. He persisted in vain that he would deliver ASHREFF's letter to none but the grand signior himself; which as the case stood, was not practicable. The TURKS, who are not very scrupulous in regard to the privileges even of the most authorized ministers, finding they could not prevail upon him to deliver up the letter, resolved to take it from him.

ASHREFF's proposals were very bold, and far from being couched in the most respectful terms. This prince in his letter assumed the pompous title of king of kings; he concluded it with four ARABIAN verses, the sense of which seems to be very romantic, as well as imperious, *viz.*

“ The sabre and the lance are our sweet basil;

“ We despise the daffodil and myrrh;

“ Our drink is the blood of our enemies,

“ And their skulls serve us for our cups.”

The sentence on the signet^s was of the same nature. “ The faithful
“ observer of the commandments of the most high; the dust of the feet
“ of the four friends, ABUBEKER, OMAR, OSMAN, and ALI, is ASHREFF,
“ by the divine permission become the most illustrious of the sovereigns
“ of the earth.”

The apprehensions which had been entertained at CONSTANTINOPLE, concerning the humiliation of the AFGHANS, were changed into indignation. As they looked upon the haughtiness of ASHREFF as unpardonable, the ministers were very desirous that the people should approve of the war, so that they spared no pains to inflame their resentments.

In the mean time, ABDUL AZIZ supported his master's interest, with a confidence answerable to the pompous title which that prince had assumed. The negotiation seemed to tend more to mortify the TURKS, than

^s They give this signet the name of BUL. It is an impression in ink, which serves instead of a signature. * See Vol. I. page 317.

than the refusal of the OTTOMAN court to acknowledge ABDUL AZIZ as 1726. embassador, had humbled this AFGHAN. He behaved, under these delicate circumstances, with great intrepidity, and as much confidence, as if he had been acknowledged in a public character; insomuch, that the ministers of the grand signior began at length to be embarrassed. In the answer which the MUFTI, and the expounders of the law at CONSTANTINOPLE, gave to a letter written to them by the MIANGI and the expounders of the law at ISFAHAN, we find the principal points on which these conferences turned.

Religion was the object on which the AFGHANS founded their pretensions. ABDUL AZIZ reproached the TURKS, with having failed in an essential point of their faith, in not making all their efforts, as the AFGHANS had done, to destroy the monarchy of the SCHIAS. He allowed, that the grand signior was lawful IMAM in TURKEY; but he added, that this did not hinder ASHREFF and his successors from being IMAMS in PERSIA; especially, as a single chief is not sufficient to govern countries so vastly extended, as those possessed by mussulmen. He maintained, that a conqueror, acknowledged by the grandees of a kingdom, was the lawful sovereign of it; and as such had a right to claim the towns and provinces which had been torn from it; since his sovereignty extended to those provinces and towns, as well as to places where his authority was established.

The TURKISH commissaries appointed to treat with him, made answer, that the wars which the grand signior had been obliged to maintain against the different christian powers, had prevented his destroying the empire of the SCHIAS; that he had deprived the SCHIAS of many considerable provinces, and as soon as the peace concluded with the princes of EUROPE afforded him leisure, he would accomplish the work. They added, that according to law and tradition, there could not be more than one IMAM at a time, unless their dominions were separated by the sea, which might prevent all communication: that this was not the case with respect to PERSIA; nor was ISFAHAN at such a distance, as to render the nomination of another chief necessary; since under the reign of OMAR, whose empire

1726. pire extended from MECCA to HAMADAN, a plurality of Caliphs had never been acknowledged: that the sovereignty of the conquests made by the AFGHANS, as well as of those made by the grand signior, belonged of right to this monarch, in quality of IMAM, while the AFGHANS could pretend to nothing further, than the moveable goods of the people whom they had vanquished; and they defied ABDUL AZIZ to prove the contrary.

C H A P. XXXVI.

The TURKISH ministers propose queries to the MUFTI, relating to the consistency of a rupture with ASHREFF. Answer of the MUFTI. The port declares war against ASHREFF. The AFGHAN ambassador sets out from CONSTANTINOPLE, and is arrested on the road by orders from the grand signior. CASBIN surrenders to ABDALLAH BASHA. Dispute between the TURKISH generals. Misunderstanding between the RUSSIANS and the TURKS. ABDALLAH BASHA defeats TÆHMAS's troops before ARDEVILLE.

THE TURKISH ministers persisted in maintaining that there could be only one IMAM, and that this IMAM ought to be the grand signior, not only on account of his hereditary sovereignty, but because he had in his power the principal places of worship of the three written religions^h. This dispute, the decision of which seemed to rest on the longest sword, was however supported by ABDUL AZIZ, who answered undauntedly; that if the mullahs of the two empires could acknowledge only the same head, this title was due to ASHREFF, as descended from the illustrious tribe of CORAICHⁱ, to whom the dignity of Caliph by right belongs, and as destroyer of the monarchy of the SCHIAS; and not to a prince born among a nation of an obscure original, who, not satisfied with granting peace to heretics, had, by a treaty contrary to the law, delivered

into

^h MECCA, because of the temple, which they say ABRAHAM, father of the HEBREWS, built there, and as the place where MAHOMMED was born: JERUSALEM, respected by the JEWS, and much more so by the christians: and MEDINA, the seat of the empire, and burying place of their prophet, and of the first Caliphs his successors.

ⁱ The tribe of MAHOMMED, one of the most illustrious of MECCA, who were distinguished by their care of the temple which was intrusted to them.

into the hands of infidels, several cities ^k in which mosques had been erected. 1/26

These conferences served to increase the animosity of both parties. The port was desirous of war; but as the MAHOMMEDANS look upon it as vile and dishonourable to declare war against a people of their own sect, the TURKS would have been glad at least, that ASHREFF should lay them under a necessity of breaking with him, or to find some proper reason for a rupture: the most plausible seemed to arise from the very nature of the negotiation, especially as the AFGHAN, in the course of the argument, pretended to prove his master superior in birth and dignity to the grand signior.

The letters which passed between the MUFTI of CONSTANTINOPLE, and the MEANGI of ISFAHAN already mentioned, were made public, and served as a manifesto; and perhaps had a stronger effect, than if it had borne that title; for it was made use of to conciliate the minds of the people to a rupture with the AFGHANS. The port then demanded the FETFA ^l of the MUFTI, proposing the following queries:

“ 1. Whether it be permitted by the law, for the true believers to acknowledge and obey at one and the same time two different chiefs?

“ 2. In what manner they ought to act against a mussulman, who after subduing the capital of PERSIA, and some other towns contiguous to the conquests made by the OTTOMAN arms, should contest the grand signior's sovereignty, annexed to the dignity of IMAM, and send letters demanding those conquests, under pretence that they constitute part of an empire which belongs to him of right, as possessor of the capital, and of the throne of the SCHIAS?”

The MUFTI answered the first of these queries, “ That a plurality of chiefs was declared unlawful by the assembly of the ASHABS ^m, unless there should be some barrier betwixt their territories, such, for instance, “ as

^k BELGRADE ceded in 1718 to the emperor by the treaty of PASSAROWITZ, and DERBEND to the empire of RUSSIA.

^l See page 36.

^m A name given to the companions of

MAHOMMED.

1726. "as the INDIAN OCEAN, which might hinder them to consult, and to
"assist each other."

On the second query he determined, "That if the mussulman in
"question desisted from his pretensions, and submitted to the authority
"of the head of the faithful, every thing would be right; but if he
"persisted in his rebellion, his death was declared necessary by a precept
"of the law, which enjoined the destruction of him."

These FETVAS were followed by a declaration of war. The grand
signior being affronted at the insolence of ASHREFF's seals, caused a signet
to be made, with an inscription of the same romantic nature as that of
ASHREFF's already related.

"The defender of justice, zealous for the four friends",
"Is ACHMED, son of the warlike MAHOMMED, ever accustomed to
"subdue his enemies.

"By the eternal truth, ASHREFF is not the most illustrious of the
"kings of the earth:

"He is a paste kneaded with the leaven of MIR VAIS, a rebel, and
"symbol of ignominy."

If we consider with what a blind enthusiasm some religious wars have
been carried on in EUROPE, we shall not be surprized at these romantic
preludes to the shedding of MAHOMMEDAN blood. After these contests,
ABDUL AZIZ had his audience of leave from the grand vizir on the last
day of MARCH, with very little ceremony. This minister however pre-
sented him with ten purses ° for himself, one for his nephew, who had
accompanied him in his journey, and another for his chaplain. He also
sent a very fine watch for ASHREFF's ATHEMAT DOULET, in acknowledg-
ment for a string of pearls which he had received from that minister.
The next day ABDUL AZIZ took his leave of the musti, and departed for
BAGDAT under the conduct of a TURKISH AGA.

This AFGHAN embassador had scarce entered the province of DIARBE-
KIR, when he was arrested by the commandant of KERKISIA, a fortress
near

° ABUKERKER, OMAR, OSMAN, and ALI.

° 500 dollars of 4 s. each purse.

near the EUPHRATES. The port, in order to authorize such a proceeding, 1726. gave out that ASHREFF had set the example, by confining, in the common jail, an officer whom ACHMED BASHA had sent to him; but it may be presumed, that the grand signior was unwilling this envoy should inform ASHREFF, of the repugnance which the TURKISH army shewed to the war.

In the mean time, the inhabitants of CASBIN made an offer to ABDALLAH BASHA, of submitting to the OTTOMAN dominion, on condition the grand signior would be satisfied with sending them a TURKISH governor, but no troops. This general, however, sent 12000 men under the command of ALI BASHA, one of his principal officers, who took possession of the town in the name of the grand signior. MARAGA also fell under the dominion of the port; but this conquest had like to have proved fatal, by the jealousy which arose between the BASHAS ABDALLAH and ACHMED, who both pretended to the government of that place. This town had always been in the district of TAVRIS, a circumstance which seemed decisive in favour of ABDALLAH; and yet the reputation of ACHMED prevailed over every other consideration. ABDALLAH would have retired to OURFA, the capital of his government, if the grand signior had not recommended his sacrificing his private resentment to the interest of the empire.

The RUSSIAN minister at the port having learnt that a body of TURKS had advanced towards GHILAN, made his complaint, and was answered, that the RUSSIANS ought to repel any troops who should disturb them, contrary to treaty. It could not however be supposed, that this detachment had acted without orders; hence it was inferred, that the TURKS had entered GHILAN, only to feel the pulse of the RUSSIANS, who were considered as enjoying the choicest province in the whole country, tho' in fact they drew but very little, if any advantage from it. It is reasonable to presume, that the curiosity of the TURKS was excited by the sollicitation of both the ENGLISH and FRENCH embassadors: the ARMENIANS, who were wont to bring silk to them from GHILAN, on account of these troubles discontinued their caravans, which was by no means satisfactory to the merchants of these nations.

1726. The OTTOMAN armies had in the mean time taken the field, and their first operations seemed to promise as much success as the preceding years. ABDALLAH BASHA received advice, that the PERSIANS had assembled troops near the conflux of the ARAS and the KURA, designing to attack ARDEVILLE. Upon which he detached 10,000 men against them, under the command of his son ABDERRAHMAM, and put them to flight.

C H A P. XXXVII.

TÆHMAS SHAH endeavours to negotiate a treaty with the RUSSIANS and TURKS. ASHREFF fortifies ISFAHAN. He marches an army to meet ACHMED BASHA. Stratagem used by ASHREFF to evade a battle with the TURKS. ACHMED resolves to give the AFGHANS battle. The TURKS are defeated.

TÆHMAS SHAH was now a fugitive in the province of MAZANDERAN, after his escape from the snare which had been laid for him by ASHREFF. That escape convinced him, that the throne of his ancestors was recoverable only by force of arms; and seeing himself betrayed or deserted in every quarter, he determined to agree to the execution of the treaty of CONSTANTINOPLE. In consequence hereof he sent an embassador to the court of RUSSIA; and at the same time he wrote to ABDALLAH BASHA, desiring this general to acquaint the port of his resolution.

His letter, among other particulars, contained as follows: “ The vilest
 “ of our subjects, some miserable tribes of AFGHANS, have by the per-
 “ mission of the Supreme, revolted against their lawful sovereign, and
 “ made themselves master of part of our dominions. You have taken
 “ advantage of this fatal conjuncture to attack us, and these hostilities have
 “ prevented our stopping the progress of the rebels. Such a behaviour we
 “ did not expect. Who could have imagined, that an OTTOMAN ge-
 “ neral

“ neral would have had recourse to artifice, to make himself master of 1726.
“ TEFLIS?

“ How can we discover an enemy disguised under the veil of friend-
“ ship? Does the bird know that the spray on which it perches, will
“ one day make its cage^h?

“ The RUSSIANS have offered us their assistance, but we refused it
“ from a nation who are enemies to our religion. Being therefore under
“ a necessity of punishing our rebellious subjects, we earnestly beg you
“ will engage our illustrious father, the PADISHAHⁱ, who is the refuge
“ of the universe, to grant us a truce of three years; and we agree that
“ the countries which he has conquered, shall always remain in his
“ hands.”

How advantageous soever these proposals might appear, the port wavered in her determination. If she granted the truce, TÆHMAS might be enabled to recover his dominions, which he now yielded by necessity. On the other hand, if she continued deaf to his petition, he might throw himself intirely into the hands of the RUSSIANS. Under these circumstances, the grand signior commissioned MUSTAFA EFFENDI, a man, who by his extraordinary abilities had raised himself early in life to very considerable employments, to go and examine upon the spot into the situation of affairs, under the specious pretext of negotiating the treaty which this prince had proposed.

TÆHMAS's proposals to the court of RUSSIA did not meet with greater success. Prince DOLGORUKI, who commanded this year in the conquered provinces, detained the ambassador; and we do not find that any regard was shewn to the proposals: indeed it was not probable that the RUSSIANS should appear in behalf of the fugitive king of PERSIA, when they remained inactive with regard to their own conquest.

These negotiations of TÆHMAS did not create so great uneasiness at ISFAHAN, as the neighbourhood of the OTTOMAN armies. ASHREFF, considering

H h 2

^h ARABIAN OR PERSIC verses. ⁱ A title which the grand signior assumes, and which is explained by that of emperor, but carries with it also a different meaning, as the chief of the MAHOMMEDANS both in spirituals and temporals.

1726. considering that all his forces would be insufficient to defend so large and ill fortified a town, had formed a project of a very singular nature. This was to build a second city within the inclosure of the first. The walls were made of earth, and about forty feet high; they were flanked with towers near fifty paces distant from each other, and surrounded with a large deep ditch. This new city included the old citadel, the great square, and the king's palace; and what is most surprizing, it was finished in less than three months, tho' it was above four miles in circumference.

ASHREFF having thus prepared a place of retreat, thought of rendering it more difficult of access to his new enemies. With this design, he detached some troops, who ravaged the open country from this capital to the very gates of CASBIN.

ACHMED BASHA, who was marching towards ISFAHAN at the head of a formidable army, was therefore obliged to change his rout. He was not advanced far, when the inhabitants of CASBIN, excited by the emissaries of ASHREFF, declared for this prince, and drove away the garrison which ABDALLAH KOUPROLI had quartered in that city, contrary to the treaty which they had made.

ASHREFF, depending more on his cunning and politics, than on the strength of his armies, published several manifesto's upon this occasion, by which he exhorted some other towns to follow the example of CASBIN: and in order to persuade them to it the more easily, he promised to exempt them from all imposts during the space of three years, if they would voluntarily submit to his dominion.

This prince, after the example of his predecessor, used all his endeavours to prevent the inhabitants of the capital knowing what passed abroad: yet they received some imperfect accounts concerning the motions and designs of the TURKS, which flung the city into a general consternation. The OTTOMAN army were apprehended to be very numerous, so that the fall of the AFGHANS was considered as inevitable. The PERSIANS and christians were equally desirous of changing masters, the one thro' aversion, and the other from views of commerce; but the recent remembrance

remembrance of the miseries they had suffered, and the notion they had entertained of the cruelty of the TURKS, made them consider this new revolution as a misfortune, in which they were in great danger of being involved. 1726.

ASHREFF was not without anxiety, but he concealed all emotions of fear, with a seeming indifference. That he might not risk his whole fortune at once, by waiting for the enemy under the walls of his capital, he put himself at the head of his troops, and went forward to meet them. His first camp was at SHAH BAGHI, a place distant five or six leagues from ISFAHAN. Here he spent some days in making the necessary preparations; after which he marched towards HAMADAN, by the same road which he knew ACHMED BASHA had taken.

The TURKISH army was advanced about twenty leagues from that city, when his scouts brought him word, that the AFGHANS were within sight. Towards the 20th of NOVEMBER, the two armies incamped within three leagues of each other; they had been in this position some days, when ACHMED BASHA resolved to try the mettle of an enemy, with whose manner of fighting he was not acquainted. With this view, he ordered two thousand horse^k, supported by four thousand Janissaries, to advance before the main body of his army; but this detachment having been conducted by guides not well acquainted with the road; within half a league of ASHREFF's camp, were surrounded by the AFGHANS, and cut in pieces; almost in sight of their general, who was in full march with his whole army to their assistance.

ACHMED, discouraged at this misfortune, ordered his army to entrench themselves. ASHREFF, in the mean while, had recourse to art and stratagem. The small number and the inexperience of his troops not permitting him to expect any advantage over his enemy by nobler methods; he endeavoured to sow the seeds of sedition in the TURKISH camp. He spared neither money nor promises to tempt those officers whom he thought least mindful of their duty; whilst his partisans in the TURKISH army handed writings about in form of manifesto's, wherein he protested,
“ That

^k Spahis, or ASIATIC cavalry.

1726. " That it was with the greatest concern he saw mussulmen bent upon
 " the destruction of each other; that this war, unlawful in itself, and
 " dishonourable to religion, had already lasted too long. In regard to
 " himself, he called GOD and MAHOMMED to witness, that he wished
 " for nothing with so much earnestness, as to enter into a reasonable ac-
 " commodation." To this he added another expedient of a more public
 kind, but not less artful: He chose from among his nation four CHEIKS¹,
 the most venerable for their age and knowledge; and ordering them to
 put on their ceremonial habits, he sent them as embassadors to the
 BASHA's camp.

These old men presented themselves unarmed, and were conducted to
 the general, who treated them with respect. After the usual compliments,
 the eldest of them addressing himself to the BASHA, in an audible but
 modest tone of voice, spoke to this effect: " ASHREFF, our sovereign
 " lord, has sent us to desire you not to draw your sabre against mussul-
 " men, who have obeyed the precept of the law in subverting the throne
 " of the SCHIAS. He is surprized that the OTTOMANS should treat him
 " as an enemy, and make an alliance with christians, with a design to
 " strip him of a kingdom, to which his being a descendant of the pro-
 " phet's own tribe, his religion, and his conquests, give him such just
 " rights. He protests before GOD, that he lays all the blood that shall
 " be spilt in this iniquitous war to your charge, if you oppose his establish-
 " ing the true worship in his dominions, and reduce the AFGHANS to the
 " hard necessity of defending themselves against their own brethren."

This audience was given, according to custom, in full assembly. The
 TURKISH general perceiving that this discourse made an impression on the
 minds of some of his soldiers, who were already influenced by the age
 and character of the deputies, made answer immediately; " That he
 " was come into PERSIA in consequence of the orders of the emperor his
 " master; that mussulmen could not, according to law, have more than
 " one head in spirituals, as well as temporals; and that the grand signior
 " being

¹ This ARABIAN word signifies not only an old man, but likewise a prince, a doctor, or the head
 of a community.

“ being possessed of this title as successor to the Caliphs, ASHREFF must 1726.
“ acknowledge him in that quality, or he should soon feel the effects of
“ the strength and courage of the OTTOMAN forces.

The general had scarce finished, when the callers to prayer^m gave notice that it was noon. The CHEIKS, attentive to the purpose of their commission, as well as their duty in point of religion, rose up immediately without making any reply, and joined in prayer with the TURKS. By this act they gave proof of the conformity of their religion; they concluded their prayer, begging with a loud voice, that the Almighty would please to open the eyes, and to touch the hearts of these mussulmen their brethren.

After this they withdrew, making fresh protestations that their master was innocent of the blood that was going to be shed. This artful conduct, strengthened by the secret intrigues of ASHREFF, soon began to produce its effects; for the deputies were hardly out of the camp, when they were followed by a prince of the KOURDS, with five thousand men of his nation.

The BASHA being informed, that the CHEIKS were attended by more troops than he had sent to escort them, suspected some treachery, and dispatched a large body of horse after the deserters: part of this detachment joined the KOURDS, so that the rest being inferior in number, were obliged to suffer them to proceed unmolested to the enemy's army.

ACHMED being struck with this event, which might prove of a very dangerous consequence, resolved to give the enemy battle. ASHREFF, grown braver by necessity, and the reinforcement of the KOURDS, who came over to him, marched immediately out of his camp, and advanced towards the enemy. The TURKS quitted their lines, and ranged themselves in battalia. Their army consisted of between seventy and eighty thousand men. The right wing was formed by twenty thousand KOURDS, who were all cavalry, under the orders of BABEC SOLIMAN OGLOU their prince. The left was commanded by SELICTAR MAHOMMED, and five other BASHAS, among whom were ABDERRAHMAM, son of the SERA3-

KIER

^m These are called MOEZINS.

1726. KIER ABDALLAH, and HUSSEIN also, of the celebrated family of KOU-PROLI. This army was also attended with a train of seventy pieces of cannon.

ASHREFF's army consisted of seventeen thousand foot, among whom were twelve thousand AFGHANS, with coats of mail^a; sixteen thousand horse, AFGHANS, PERSEES, and DERGHEZINS, with forty harquebusses mounted on camels backs. This prince, surrounded by his principal ministers, was seated, according to the custom of the INDIAN kings, on a throne carried by an elephant.

The TURKS gave the signal of battle at six in the morning, by firing ten pieces of cannon. The AFGHANS returned it with five: upon which the SERASKIER charged them briskly at the head of the right wing, and repeated the attack three several times with great bravery, during which time his artillery kept an incessant fire; yet he was repulsed on every side, and obliged, towards three in the afternoon, to retire in disorder to his entrenchments. The TURKS lost twelve thousand men: their defeat would probably have been more complete, if ASHREFF had not forbid his men to pursue them.

This conduct might also be imputed to a new piece of policy. The greatest part of the OTTOMAN army had not engaged, and an eagerness of pursuit might have snatched the victory from him; especially as there was little reason to believe that the enemy, contrary to their custom in such cases, would keep the field.

^a This is a light iron net-work about the head and shoulders, and sometimes they wear the same kind of armour on their bodies under their cloaths.

C H A P. XXXVIII.

Artful behaviour of ASHREFF towards the TURKS. Situation of the port in regard to other powers. Great preparations in TURKEY against the AFGHANS. The TURKS unsuccessful against the ARMENIANS. Prudent administration of ASHREFF. The TURKS send commissaries into PERSIA to treat with ASHREFF. A treaty of peace concluded in the camp of HAMADAN, between the TURKS and the AFGHANS in 1727.

ASHREFF, after his victory, removed his camp to the field of 1726. battle. The event justified the prudence of his measures; for the next night, the KOURDS spread themselves along the lines of the TURKS, crying out, that as part of the army was gone over to the AFGHANS, they would also retire immediately; after which, taking an advantage of the disorder which they had occasioned, they began to plunder the baggage.

These seditious clamours produced the effect, which the authors of them intended. The SERASKIER perceiving that he should expose himself to no purpose, in venturing a second engagement, while his troops were thus disheartened and mutinous, decamped silently in the night; and leaving his baggage and artillery behind him, he retired to KHERMANSHA.

The AFGHAN prince did not interrupt his march: it was not his design to demolish an army which might be easily replaced, but to baffle the projects of the port, by increasing the repugnance which the TURKISH nation in general shewed to this war. The same religious zeal, which has ever created such bloody contests between the TURKS and the PERSIANS, was now a reason not to fight with the AFGHANS. ASHREFF accompanied rather than pursued them as far as the walls of this city. But not satisfied with having defeated his enemies, and driven them from his frontiers, which was acting merely on the defensive, he used other gentle expedients to disarm them.

He was no sooner arrived near KHERMANSHA, than this artful AFGHAN sent deputies to ACHMED BASHA, who, upon the approach of the PER-

1726. SIAN army, retired with his scattered forces towards BAGDAT. Instead of proposing a negotiation, as was expected, these deputies declared to him publicly to this effect: "It is the opinion of our sovereign ASHREFF, that
 " the spoils taken from people of the same religion, cannot be kept as a
 " fair booty: as he is possessed of his dominions as a lawful prince, he
 " does not think fit to act as a robber, by detaining the property of his
 " brethren; for which reason he has commissioned us to acquaint you,
 " that you may send for your treasure and baggage, and, except arms, in
 " general for whatever your troops left in their camp." To this act of generosity, ASHREFF added that of returning the prisoners he had taken. Doubtless this prince intended to create friends of people, whom he had no further reason to fear, at least in the present campaign.

The TURKS were the more affected with it, as they had other troubles upon their hands. The death of PETER the GREAT, had not been attended with any of those changes, which they expected. This monarch's last will, supported by the grandees, and by the whole army, established the empress CATHARINE on the throne without any competition. VACHTANGA, the GEORGIAN prince, who was driven from TEFLIS, and retired to ST. PETERSBURG, was now sent to ASTRACHAN. The RUSSIAN empress being affronted at the little regard which the port shewed to the representations of her ministers, required of this prince to take up his residence in that city, in the neighbourhood of his own country. This circumstance, joined to the inconstancy of the GEORGIANS, alarmed the TURKS.

SULTAN DELI, a nephew of the KHAN of the CRIM TARTARS, now headed a body of male-contents, and gathered new strength and courage, by a great number of CIRCASSIANS and other TARTARS, whom he drew to his standard. The reputation of his arms, and the desire of plunder, had lately tempted them to make an expedition towards AZOPH, from whence they returned loaded with spoils, before the KHAN had time to oppose them.

In the mean time, things continued in some confusion on the western coast of the CASPIAN SEA. Prince DOLGORUKI made no progress on the

fide of SHIRVAN: the LESGEES were masters of great part of that province, and were interested to oppose the intended partition; so that the RUSSIAN and TURKISH deputies had no opportunity to execute their commission. Towards the south, the ARABS, naturally fierce and impatient of any foreign yoke, would not submit without the utmost reluctance. The title of CORAISH, which ASHREFF assumed, joined to the desire of novelty, might engage them in that prince's party; and with such assistance he might easily become master of MECCA and MEDINA, and cause himself to be proclaimed head of the MAHOMMEDANS°. The troubles, which had lately broke out in EGYPT, were not intirely pacified. The court endeavoured to insinuate for some time, that ASHREFF had embraced the religion of the PERSIANS; but this artifice was easily seen thro' by the people. A war, undertaken against a nation of the same faith, was considered as odious and unlawful; and the most zealous attributed the loss of the battle to the divine justice, which had confounded the temerity of those who opposed the propagation of the faith, by declaring against the destroyers of the monarchy of the SCHIAS.

Under such circumstances, a person of less esteem than ACHMED BASHA, might have had the disaster imputed to his misconduct, and, according to the usual policy of eastern countries, under this pretence been sacrificed to the public resentment. But this general was the son of a man, whose head the port had demanded several times to no purpose; and they were now to behave towards him with deference, that he might not declare in favour of ASHREFF, by which means he might assume an independent sovereignty in this province.

The republic of VENICE had not forgot her rights to the MOREA, nor the emperor of the ROMANS his to BOSNIA: this prince, already dissatisfied with the ALGERINES, who had taken one of the ships belonging to the EAST INDIA company of OSTEND, was not only in peace with all EUROPE, but also closely connected with the RUSSIANS.

With regard to SHAH TÆHMAS, they did not treat him with such contempt, as to neglect demanding of him the cession of the provinces they

1726. they had conquered; yet all the abilities of MUSTAFA EFFENDI, could not prevail on him to agree to the conditions proposed. So that the TURKS, tho' masters of great armies, and strongly inclined to reduce PERSIA to their obedience, saw themselves in danger of being forced to relinquish this favourite object.

The grand signior, sensibly disgusted at his late disgrace, opened his treasures, and employed all his ministers in making dispositions for the next campaign. They embarked twelve thousand men at ALEXANDRETTA. Six thousand men of EYDIN received orders to join them, as also a body of troops drawn from the standing forces of EGYPT: and concluding there was better reason to depend on christian subjects, who could not be worked upon by the artful insinuations of ASHREFF, they ordered the BASHA of NISSA, with twenty thousand ALBANIANS, and the BASHA of BOSNIA, with ten thousand BOSNIANS, to take the same
1727. rout towards PERSIA. The beginning of APRIL this year, ten men of war were also sent to SALONICA for fresh reinforcements.

These powerful succours were sent to ACHMED BASHA. The winter had passed without any action worth notice, except that of SAVI MUSTAFA, who marched out of GANJA, of which town he was governor, and dispersed the ARMENIANS in the neighbourhood of SHAMAKIE. These people, laying hold of the present circumstances, formed themselves into a kind of republic, which, as we have mentioned, distinguished itself by the total defeat of a body of six thousand men, whom ABDALLAH BASHA had sent against them the preceding summer. It was not long before they had their revenge also of the governor of GANJA. It was their custom to assemble in great numbers during Easter, in a plain in that neighbourhood. Having received intelligence that the TURKS, who could not pursue them into their mountains, had formed a design to surprize them on this occasion, they took their measures, and not only defended themselves, but also drew the TURKS into their defiles, where they obtained an easy victory over them.

ASHREFF saw that the OTTOMAN court meditated his ruin; and tho' he had kept the field, and obtained a victory in the last campaign, he
had

had hardly any other support than his own abilities to maintain himself upon the throne. His great point was to increase his reputation for piety and religion. With this design he obliged his ministers and principal officers to give him an exact account of their conduct and administration: at the same time, to demonstrate how much he meant to govern as a just prince, he sent to all his governors and great officers, a detail of his military operations, and of the manner in which he had governed since his accession to the throne. 1727.

This piece of policy was less necessary than he imagined. The vast preparations, which seemed to threaten his utter destruction, vanished of themselves. The new raised troops in TURKEY, who had been deceived with regard to the place to which they were at first ordered to march, obstinately refused to pass the frontiers of the empire. The desertion was so much the greater, as the apprehension of a general insurrection secured them from punishment. The people and the soldiers murmured alike against a war, which their honest, tho' superstitious, prejudices, taught them to look upon as unjust and impious.

The port, alarmed at an opposition which defeated her projects, did not hesitate long upon what measures to take. She dispatched orders to the SERASKIER, ACHMED BASHA, to enter as soon as possible into a negotiation, and to conclude a peace with ASHREFF on the most honourable conditions he could obtain.

How pressing soever these orders were, ACHMED was in no hurry to comply with them. This general having received fresh succours from the KOURDS and ARABS, had formed an army of 60,000 men; with these he hoped to repair his loss in the last campaign, the disgrace of which could not be imputed to him. The temper of this general was too well known by the TURKISH ministers, to depend on an absolute compliance on his side. Therefore they sent RICHIDI EFFENDI, a man of abilities and experience in business; he arrived in SEPTEMBER at the army, which had already entered the plain of HAMADAN. ACHMED BASHA had at least the satisfaction of treating at the head of a numerous body of forces.

1727. The AFGHAN army was not far off, when the BASHA sent to ZOULA, prime-minister and general of ASHREFF's troops, that now was the time to decide their quarrel; therefore he had only to accept of the conditions which he was commissioned to propose to him, or he must prepare for battle; when he hoped to shew what an OTTOMAN general, at the head of a faithful army, was capable of performing.

This blunt manner of opening the conferences, contributed to hasten the conclusion of a peace, now become equally acceptable to both parties. The negotiation being referred to men of abilities and moderation, towards the beginning of OCTOBER a treaty of peace was at length signed in the camp of HAMADAN.

The articles were as follows:

- I. The grand signior shall be acknowledged head of the mussulmen, and the true successor of the Caliphs.
- II. In this quality, the public prayer ^p shall be made in his name throughout all PERSIA.
- III. The provinces, cities, and towns, which he possesses in PERSIA, shall be ceded to him in perpetuity.
- IV. He shall re-enter into possession of CHUSISTAN, retaken from him during the war.
- V. He shall take possession, and hold in like manner, the cities of ZENGAN, SULTANIE, EBHER, TÆHIRAN, and their dependancies.
- VI. The artillery, arms, and standards, taken from the OTTOMAN army in 1726, shall be restored.
- VII. ASHREFF shall be acknowledged by the grand signior as lawful sovereign of the kingdom of PERSIA.
- VIII. He shall be named as such after the grand signior in the public prayers, and shall coin money in his own name.

IX. He

IX. He shall appoint an EMIR HAHDGEE to conduct the PERSIAN caravan, which goes every year in pilgrimage to MECCA⁹. This caravan shall, according to custom, take the road of BAGDAT; and the governor of that city shall not have a power, as formerly, to appoint a chief over it; nor shall it be subject to the authority of any of the grand signior's officers.

The treaty being ratified on both sides, the peace was proclaimed by circular letters through the OTTOMAN empire; and the grand signior, by a solemn embassy, acknowledged ASHREFF as the lawful sovereign of PERSIA.

⁹ This custom, as I have observed, had been discontinued by the PERSIANS, though the SUNNIS make a point of it.

The END of the THIRD VOLUME;



IX. He shall appoint an EMIR HANDEE to conduct the PERSIAN caravan, which goes every year in pilgrimage to Mecca. This caravan shall, according to custom, take the road of BAGDAD; and the governor of that city shall not have a power, as formerly, to appoint a chief over it; nor shall it be subject to the authority of any of the grand dignitary's officers.

The treaty being ratified on both sides, the peace was proclaimed by circular letters through the OTTOMAN empire; and the grand dignitary, by a solemn embassy, acknowledged ASHREFF as the lawful sovereign of PERSIA.

The emperor, as I have observed, had been disinclined by the Persian, though the treaty came a point of time.

The end of the third volume.



Hanway, Jonas, 1712-1786

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